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Up From the Depths • Editorial
Yadda yadda yadda...

2

Scott's Video Vault • Film Reviews

3

And you thought you've seen the worst. Here's the unpretentious lowdown on such dismal outings as (drum roll, please) *The Adult Version of Jekyll and Hide*, *Amanti d'Oltretomba*, *La Bestia Uccide a Sangue Freddo*, *The Blood Beast Terror*, *Blood Mania*, *Brain of Blood*, *Corruption*, *Curse of the Headless Horseman*, *Doctor Death—Seeker of Souls*, *Fascination*, *Garden of the Dead*, *Hollywood Meat Cleaver Massacre*, *The Hollywood Strangler Meets the Skid Row Slasher*, *It Lives by Night*, *Jack el Distripador de Londres*, *Kiss of the Tarantula*, *Legacy of Horror*, *La Mansión de los Muertos Vivientes*, *Necrophagus*, *La Orgia de los Muertos*, *Passi di Danza Su una Lama di Rasoio*, *Ratu Ilmu Hitam*, *Stepsisters*, *The Toolbox Murders*, *Visions of Evil*, and (whew... deep breath) *Women in Cages*.

The Rise and Appall of GICK! • Retrospective

24

The Publishing Editor looks back at the sordid history of the lamest horror rag to ever hit the stands.

You've Got to Be Kidding! • Article

30

More horror stories from the wacky world of eBay.

Stigmata Press • Catalog

44

Need something with which to line your bird's cage? We're here to help!

Letters to the Editor • Feedback

48

Guess no one read last issue. Oh, well...

Next Issue

48

Well, they say it's a dog eat dog world...

Attention, all you cyberfreaks...
Come visit our new fandangled web site at
<http://www.stigmatapress.com>



UP FROM THE DEPTHS UP FROM THE DEPTHS UP FROM THE DEPTHS UP FROM THE DEPTHS



Editorial by *Scott Aaron Stine*

Well, here it is, take it or leave it.

You almost didn't see issue five this month, as I had seriously planned on going on hiatus until I'd gotten caught up on my other projects, but the pangs of guilt were just too much to bare. How could I allow you, my faithless reader, to go an entire year without being exposed to my trademarked venting? How could I allow you to be deprived of GICK! Magazine, the only tool with which anyone has to gauge journalistic and cinematic merit in this morass of mediocrity we call "arts and entertainment". Who, pray tell, would salvage what few brain cells you have remaining by warning you which films to avoid at all costs?

Despite the pressures involved, I thought it would be unfair and selfish to break our harried bi-annual schedule. So, with the weight of the world on my shoulders, I took a couple of days to throw together this mess in the hopes that it will be mistaken as yet another issue of GICK!

The more savvy readers may notice the lack of anything even remotely resembling "investigative re-

porting" this time out; instead, you'll be treated to nothing but biased blathering, with something akin to amusing anecdotes thrown in to break the monotony. Hey... two days doesn't allow for much in the way of research, whereas any idiot can run at the mouth for forty-eight pages, right?

And—best of all—you get to pay more for it! For this, you can personally thank our ex-printer, whose ineptitude and irresponsible behavior has forced us to search out the next best thing: A *real* printer. (Unfortunately, *real* printers also charge *real* rates for their *real* services. I'm already crossing my fingers that this issue will actually reflect such improvements.) Believe it or not, we are now making less per issue than ever before. (Remember... we haven't been in the red since the first issue.) The fact that we are carrying some advertising again (legitimate businesses only, no bootlegging scum) doesn't even make a dent in the overhead. But who cares... it's only money, right?

I lied.

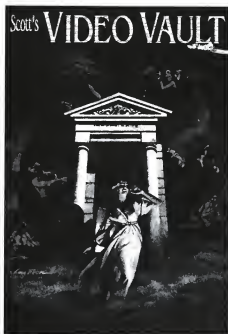
Last issue, I claimed that "when GICK! does issue its last gasp, it will because I'm sick and tired of reviewing crappy horror films, and not because of finances." (Or—more specifically—lack thereof.) I also strongly recommended a certain Co-Op to any aspiring small-press publishers who may have been listening in. In regards to both comments, I wasn't trying to deceive anyone; I honestly believed that A. Lack of finances wouldn't deter my publishing schedule, and B. The printers with whom I was going through were professionals worthy of our support.

As I write this, I am unaware of the outcome of a little "mishap" that currently has my bleeding ulcer doing 360s. Upon completion of the previous issue, I found myself quite pleased with the results. (Insert sound of hand patting oneself on the back here.) This issue was the first that looked reasonably professional in my eyes. Not that there wasn't room for improvement; I may be delusional, but not so far gone as to ever assume that. Still, number four was the first to reach a level of competence for which I had been striving for quite some time. Thanks to upgrades in software and hardware, I was able to finally produce a magazine of which I was truly proud.

The day UPS showed up on my doorstep with a shipment from my printers, I showed all the composure of a young child on Christmas morn. But, before I had even cracked open the first box, something from the depths of my subconscious had feebly crawled its way out of the muck, trying to prepare me for the worst.

See *Up From the Depths*

Continued on page 47



Video Reviews by Scott Aaron Stine

Most of the films reviewed herein are accompanied by fairly extensive credits, which are outlined in the following manner:

Original Title of Film [English translation, if necessary]
 (Year of Production)
 Production Company or Distributor [Country of Origin]
 DIR = Director/s, PRO = Producer/s, SCR = Screenwriter/s,
 DOP = Director/s of Photography, EXP = Executive
 Producer/s, MFX = Make-Up Effects, SFX = Special Effects,
 VFX = Visual Effects, MUS = Music Composer/s, and STR =
 Cast (All actors are alphabetized by last name. In case of a
 single name—an honor usually reserved by either stunt
 animals or strippers—it is alphabetized thusly.) Note: In the
 case of pseudonyms, the cast or crew member's real name is
 followed by their chosen alias in parenthesis.
 AKA = Alternate title/s [English translation, if necessary] (In
 case of alternate versions of the film where additional footage
 is added, original years of production are given here as well.)
 Approximate running time; Color and/or Black & White
 NOV = Availability of film novelization and author [Name of
 Publisher]
 SND = Availability of soundtrack [Name of Record Label]
 VID = Availability on videocassette and title of release

[Video Label (and format of tape if not NTSC); listed running
 time of print; language of print and subtitles; widescreen
 letterboxing (LBX); and—if applicable—any "double-bill" or
 "triple-bill" features the video release may include as well]
 (When a running time for a particular videocassette is
 erroneously cited on the box or label, the actual running time
 of the print it contains is noted in parenthesis immediately
 following the listed time; I have also done the same with
 "compressed" running times of non-NTSC formats. As a rule,
 I round the running time to the nearest minute. If this isn't
 case specific enough for you, go get yourself a subscription to
 Video Watchdog; as anally retentive as I am, these masochists
 have me beat by a mile or three.)

Some of the titles may also be accompanied by less technical
 information, such as ADL = Adline/blurbs used in adver-
 tisements, or—for those with weak constitutions and/or a
 sense of ethics—I've also issued various "Warnings" as to
 whether a film contains scenes of animal cruelty and/or
 slaughterhouse footage, and autopsy footage and/or actual
 surgery footage. (The former two are delineated with a
 "X X X X", and the latter two by a "A A A A".)

And—so as not to forget the hardcore splatterpunk—I have
 issued certain films a "hardcore" rating, delineated by a "
 S S S S". These are included solely for those indiscriminate
 individuals who are only looking for the goriest fare, and
 don't want to mess around with jelly milktoast. As far as
 carnage is concerned, these are the crème de la crème. (It
 doesn't necessarily mean these films are any good, mind you;
 they're just a little nastier than what most people are
 accustomed to seeing in modern day horror films.)

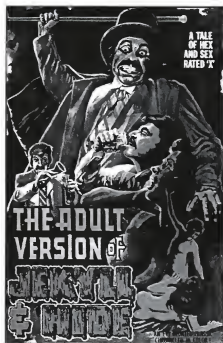
Oh, and if you can't figure out what "XXX" stands for, it's a
 safe assumption that you really do need to get out of the house
 more often. Nothing personal, I assure you.

A Note from the Editor

Hey, everyone, we've got some new blood reviewing
 films this issue! This time out, I thought I might give my
 video where... I mean, my contributing editor Donna Berlock
 a chance to put in his two cents worth. (Let's see you suffer
 through all of those celluloid atrocities without just
 forwarding through a single one, Mr. "Gay Porn Bad"; I
 bet you'll be seeing a few hitchhiking pigs yourself before all
 is said and done.)

Alack... revenge is a sweet thing, indeed. Un-
 fortunately, his significant other Jackie has thus been
 subjected to this deluge of cinematic sewage as well. From
 the slough of nasty phone messages I've received from her in
 return, I think she's none too pleased with the films that
 now consume their quality time together.

Scott Aaron Stine, 12/08/00



♥ The Adult Version of Jekyll and Hyde (1972)

El-Monde Productions [USA]

DIR: B. Ron Elliot (aka Byron Mabe)

PRO: B. Ron Elliot

SCR: Robert Birch

DOP: Robert Birch

AST: Lee Raymond

MUS: William Allen Castleman and William Loos

STR: René Bond, Bruce Brightman, Jennifer Brooks, Jack Buddliner, Jude Farese, Linda McDowell, Harry Schwartz, Jane Tsentas (aka Jane Tsensas), and Linda York

AKA: La Vie Intime du Dr. Jekyll
[The Intimate Life of Dr. Jekyll]

Approximately 91m; Color

VID: The Adult Version of Jekyll and Hyde
[Something Weird Video; 91m]

ADL: A tale of hex and sex Rated X

If the title didn't tip you off, yes, Robert Louis Stevenson's classic tale of duality and the human psyche did indeed prove rife with possibilities for the grind-

house market, and was thus plundered for every ounce of sex and violence it offered. Although lacking the artistic worth of, say, Walerian Borowczyk's fetishistic masterpiece *Dr. Jekyll et les Femmes* (1981), this hare-brained adaptation is no less enjoyable.

This dated softcore sex pic won't hold much interest to most gorehounds (the most graphic scene being a forced castration—well, out and out emasculation is more like it). Unless, of course, you also enjoy dated softcore sex pics. (One scene, worth the price of admission alone, involves a young woman getting herself worked up into a lather over a medical book illustration. And they think *we're* sick.) Fans of porn/sexploitation star René Bond shan't be disappointed by her performance as a conniving, but well-intentioned receptionist. Mr. Hide, on the other hand (bearing an uncanny resemblance to Tom Savini from *The Ripper* (1985)—sans the goofy contact lenses), is a real hoot. Not wanting to leave any stone unturned, the script has him not only metamorphose into the required misanthropic psychopath, but an amorous woman as well. (Complete with already established tan lines, no less.) Whether this contrivance is a blatant lift from Hammer Studios' *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* (made the previous year), or a convenient way to throw in some explicit rug munching, or both, one can only speculate.

Sleazy stuff, though, no matter how you cut it.

Devon Says...

For some reason Scott had me watch this once before, so I was not at all eager to see it again. In this version, the good doctor—who looks like a cross between Tom Savini and Sonny Bono—isn't really all that good. He's having an affair with René Bond, which means the viewer is treated to seeing the M.D.'s flabby ass in action right away. Joy. When the doctor takes his fiancée to an antique store, he comes across an old book, evidently the diary of Dr. Henry Jekyll. It's never made clear why he wants the book so bad, but he hides it behind some other books and returns later that night to purchase it. He's told he can't have it, so he kills the storeowner, who makes for a very convincing corpse that blinks. This makes one wonder why the doctor didn't just steal the damn book in the first place, if killing was an acceptable means of acquiring it. All of this is *before* he turns into Hyde, mind you.

Then there's a flashback to the Mr. Hide of old—played by the same actor to make things more confusing—where he whips a girl a few times (naturally, this makes her lose consciousness) then kills her by jabbing a hot poker into her bed. (Maybe the filmmakers were trying to convey something else was going on, but it's still apparent he's stabbing the bed.)

Anywho, the current doc tries the formula and it turns him into a (much younger) woman with a need to feel herself up. This is one of the few good plot developments, because now the Jekyll character's ass is much firmer. There's a lesbian sequence, and more of the doctor's unconvincing office. ("Hey, if we hang an oriental rug on the wall, it'll look like the Mayo Clinic!") Then Jekyll picks up a sailor at a bar described as a "rough place," evidently the other two barflies are mean drunks when they're still mobile. Jekyll takes him out back and eventually cuts off his dick, begging the question, "What movie is complete without a nice, blood-dripping dildo?" Here, the movie's main philosophical question surfaces: If Jekyll turns into Miss Hyde and picks up men, does it make him gay?

👁 Amanti d'Oltre Tomba
[Lovers from Beyond the Grave] (1965)

Produzione Cinematographica Emmeci [Italy]

DIR: Mario Caiano

PRO: Carlo Caiano

SCR: Mario Caiano and Fabio de Agostino

DOP: Enzo Barboni

MUS: Ennio Morricone

STR: Giuseppe Addobbati, Rik Battaglia, Lawrence Clift, Helga Lina Stern, Paul Müller, and Barbara Steele

AKA: Amants d'Outre-Tombe
The Faceless Monster
Night of the Doomed
Nightmare Castle
Orgasmo

Approximately 97m; Black & White

VID: Nightmare Castle [Sinister Cinema; 90m]
Nightmare Castle
[Something Weird Video; 79m]

Conniving adulterers, vengeful ghosts, yadda yadda yadda... honestly, it's nothing we haven't seen before. A little more complicated than most, maybe, but still yesterday's news.

This particularly sordid gothic thriller reminds one of early Mario Bava stripped bare of his more stylish approaches to filmmaking. (If you think that Bava was little more than an overrated cinematographer, then I suggest you just stay away and go back to whacking off over whatever dreck currently commands your attention.) Technically, *Amanti d'Oltre Tomba* offers little in the way of anything outstanding, with the exception of leading lady Barbara Steele. Ms. Steele is delightfully haunting as per usual, despite bad dubbing and the fact she is forced to sport a blonde wig throughout most of the film. (What's most disheartening



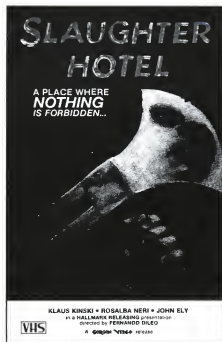
about her career is that, following the success of *La Maschera del Demonio* [The Mask of the Demon] (1960) aka *Black Sunday*, she was offered few roles outside of low-budget horror fare. In all honesty, films such as this would be little more than a footnote if it weren't for her presence.)

This film also suffers from a scarcely heard soundtrack; at times, it adds to the somber tone, but more often than not it surfaces awkwardly, and at the most inopportune moments. Also, the low grade shocks — merits that barely secure it a place in splatter film history — tend to overpower the truly effective moments this film has to offer. *Black Sunday*, it ain't.

Although enjoyable, *Amanti d'Oltre Tomba* is not as memorable as similar fare. As a fairly gratuitous film for its time, though, it's worth a look for those interested in the evolution of the genre.

Devon Says...

Ah, Sinister Cinema, where would we be without you providing all of this public domain garbage to



Amanti d'Oltre Tomba continued...

the unsuspecting populace? Well, there'd be fewer prints of Cash Flagg movies circulating...

Amanti d'Oltre Tomba is like Gaslight meets Suspicion with an EC-style zombie revenge story thrown in. The dubbing was a bit distracting, and—since it was a Sinister release—the print was kinda' grainy and hard to watch. The story just seemed too familiar to me; whether this was because it borrowed elements from the films listed above or because it's been frequently cloned since, I'm not sure. Either way, I was a bit bored. You know there's a problem when the scariest thing in the movie is Barbara Steel's wig.

☛ La Bestia Uccide a Sangue Freddo [The Beast Kills in Cold Blood] (1971)

Cineproduzione Daunia 70 [Italy]

DIR: Fernando Di Leo

PRO: Tiziano Longo and Armando Novelli

SCR: Fernando di Leo and Nino Latino

DOP: Franco Villa

MUS: Silvano Spadaccino

STR: Giulio Baraghini, Ettore Ceri, Fernando Cerulli, Gidia Desideri, John Eley (aka John Ely), Jane Garret, John Karlsen, Klaus Kinski, Margaret Lee, Rosalba Neri, Antonio Radaelli, Sandro Rossi, and Monica Strebel

AKA: Asylum Erotica

La Cliniques des Horreurs

[The Hospital of Horrors]

La Cliniques des Ténèbres

[The Hospital of Darkness]

The Cold-Blooded Beast

Hotel Erotica

Les Insatisfaites Poupées

Érotiques du Dr. Hichcock

[The Insatiable Sex Dolls of Dr. Hichcock]

Les Poupées du Professeur Hichcock

[The Dolls of Professor Hichcock]

Les Poupées Sanglantes du Docteur X

[The Bloody Dolls of Doctor X]

Das Schloß der Blauen Vögel

[The Castle of the Blue Bird]

Slaughter Hotel

Der Triebmörder [The Sex Killer]

Approximately 89m; Color

VID: Asylum Erotica [Meteor Video; 72m]

La Bestia Uccide a Sangue Freddo

[Video Clak (PAL); 89m; In Italian]

Les Poupées du Professeur Hichcock

[Farah Film (PAL); 85(89)m; In French]

Slaughter Hotel [MPI Home Video; 100(89)m]

ADL: Carved out of today's headlines! See the slashing of 8 innocent nurse! Slaughter Hotel... A place where nothing is forbidden!

Kinski stars in this quickie as a chain-smoking and not-altogether-convincing psychiatrist at a clinic for women who may or may not be a killer slaughtering the patients while they lounge around in various stages of undress. (Which seems to be whenever they're not playing croquette with the nurses.) Maladies range from nymphomania to incestuous longings, giving the hare-brained scriptwriters plenty to work with in the way of exploitive plot devices. If only the production values could have lived up to the possibilities.

Even as far as Euro-trash is concerned, this one is a laborious effort. The sloppy hand-held camerawork (one almost wonders if the cinematographer had imbibed a few too many spirits just prior to filming) is enough to make viewers with even iron constitutions reach for the Dramamine. (If the photography doesn't make your head reel, I guarantee the editing—performed by someone whose intent was more sadistic than the killer herein—will.) To add insult to injury, whoever transferred the shoddy American print to tape

must've decided that panning and scanning didn't have a bad enough reputation, and spent much of their time avoiding the subjects onscreen altogether. Oh, and I swear much of the music was lifted from other, probably more successful Euro-flicks. (101 Strings, giallo-style.)

There is a heck of a lot of nudity and cut-rate gore (a failed attempt to pad out what is a pretty slipshod murder-mystery), but even the most hardcore exploitation junkies will find it an effort to wade through the proceedings. (Hell, even Kinski—usually a master at looking pensive—comes across as rather bored for most of the film's ninety minutes.)

As you may have noticed, the original ad campaign (as well as the film's finale, I assume) was devised to mirror and cash in on the still-lingering notoriety of the massacre of eight student nurses by sick fuck Richard Speck. The promoters of this film, it seems, aren't much better. And—just in case this bag ain't sleazy enough for you—there is rumored to be a version containing hardcore footage making the rounds, but this has yet to be substantiated. (With the names involved, I seriously doubt it, unless it was spliced in after the fact.)

La Bestia Uccide a Sangue Freddo is ultra-sleazy Eurotrash for those whom aesthetics mean nothing.

Devon Says...

There's an old Jackie Chan flick that I always thought was the epitome of how *not* to pan and scan. The image on the TV screen often doesn't include the person speaking, and in one scene a group of people are at a table and the image has been reduced to showing just the table and not the people on either side of it. I thought that was as bad as it could get, until I saw Slaughter Hotel. Whoever panned and scanned this movie was completely oblivious as to where the action was occurring on the screen. (In one scene, the camera actually moves across a room, but because the movie has been reformatted for television, the actress who has just entered the room is no longer visible. She walks across the room with the camera panning in front of her, but she is *still* not in the image, and doesn't catch up with the camera until it rests on a bed. So, it's essentially an extended shot of the room, and nothing more.)

By the time I got to this movie, I was pretty goddamn sick of actors and actresses just wandering around. But, when the opening scene of this film showed a killer standing over a nude woman, the camera focusing on her pubic hair in a slightly more subtle than Jesse Franco fashion, I knew I'd finally struck Euro-trash. While this isn't anywhere near as sleazy as Arabella, L'Angelo Nero and similar films, it still has its share of the twisted: Lesbian nurses, incest,

nymphomania, women who can't keep their homicidal urges in check, etc. People may have still been wandering around a bit, but, dammit, at least they were naked! I normally don't care much for movies like this, but at least some stuff happened in it. Besides, any movie featuring that lovable throw back to the Cro-Magnon era, Klaus Kinski, can't be all that bad. (Unless, of course, it's Schizoid.)

The movie is set in an apparently all female asylum, yet whoever changed the title for this release put "hotel" in it. The real puzzler is why any asylum would have so much medieval weaponry, and—if an asylum were to have so many ancient death instruments on hand—why would the room containing them be so easily accessible in a place housing homicidal women?

☛ The Blood Beast Terror (1967)

Tigon-British Films [UK]

DIR: Vernon Sewell

PRO: Arnold L. Miller

SCR: Peter Bryan

DOP: Stanley A. Long

EXP: Tony Tenser

SFX: Roger Dicken

MUS: Paul Ferris

STR: Leslie Anderson, Simon Cain, Robert Cawdron,

Kenneth Colley, Beryl Cooke, Peter Cushing,

Glynn Edwards, Roy Evans, Robert Flemyng,

David Griffin, Vanessa Howard, Roy Hudd,

Joan Ingram, David Lyell, John Scott Martin,

William Maxwell, Mike Mundell, Russell

Napier, John Paul, Norman Pitt, Malcolm

Rogers, Drew Russell, Honor Shephard, Kevin

Stoney, Wanda Ventham, Robin Wentworth,

and William Wilde

AKA: Blood Beast from Hell

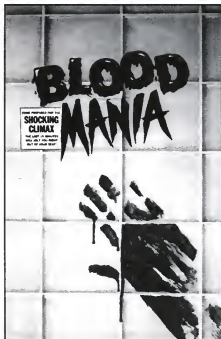
The Deathhead Vampire

The Vampire Beast Craves Blood

Approximately 74m; Color

Peter Cushing, star of many a Hammer Film Production, here plays a police inspector investigating a series of strange murders involving young, viril men completely drained of their blood. A vampire, you say? Of course not... everyone knows vampires don't exist. How ludicrous. No, the culprit is an entomologist's daughter who turns into a giant, blood-drinking death-head moth while courting her ill-fated lovers. Sounds pretty gosh darn logical to me, yessiree.

Story details aside, The Blood Beast Terror is not only typical of 1960s gothic horror fare, but for Tigon's low-key genre offerings as well. The melodrama is heavy, the atmosphere laid on just as thick, and there are even a few twists and turns along the way, despite



The Blood Beast Terror continued...

the fact that the young girl's unfortunate affliction is telegraphed early on. To "compliment" our resident beastie are some tacky effects (the monster is barely a notch above Roger Corman's original *Wasp Woman*) and a silly, anti-climactic finale in reference to how the creature is dispatched. (Rational, maybe, but still no less silly and anti-climactic.)

Basil Rathbone (who made a name as Sherlock Holmes) was slated to star, but—maybe to his fortune—he passed away shortly before *The Blood Beast Terror* went into production. Maybe death is kind.

C'mon... it's a giant, blood-drinking deathhead moth. What more could I say?

Devon Says...

I thought this movie would be Japanese, what with its poor semantic title, but, no, it's British. Oddly, Japanese and British genre movies have something in common for me: I can't follow their plots. It seems no matter how much attention I pay, I have no idea why

events are taking place in horror movies from those two islands. What's happening in *Guinea Pig* or *Horror of Dracula*? I don't know. Even *Godzilla* flicks befuddle me at times (although this is sometimes due to plot holes, I'm sure), and complex movies like *Angel Dust* leave me begging for enlightenment. Another thing about British horror movies: They generally suck. *The Blood Beast Terror* is no exception.

This film is brimming with stupid English people talking about bugs. After something like nine hours of bug-speak, a stupid moth woman shows up, kills some people, then catches fire, never once looking even remotely realistic. How would a realistic moth woman look, one may wonder? Nothing like the one in *The Blood Beast Terror*, I'm sure.

☛ Blood Mania (1971)

Jude Productions [USA]

DIR: Robert O'Neil

PRO: Peter Carpenter and Chris Marconi

SCR: Tony Crechales and Toby Sacher

DOP: Gary Graver and Bob Maxwell

MUS: Don Hulet and Don Vincent

STR: Eric Allison, Arell Blanton, Peter Carpenter, Jacqueline Dalya, Maria de Aragon, Vicki Peters, Alex Rocco, Leslie Simms, Reid Smith, and Reagan Wilson

Approximately 90m; Color

VID: *Blood Mania* [VCI Home Video; 88(90)m]

ADL: SEE IT-FEEL IT-TASTE IT-ONCE YOU HAVE HAD IT YOU WILL NEVER BE THE SAME!!!

Anyone who has already had the displeasure of seeing this turd is probably wondering what in Sam Hill it's doing in a magazine that focuses on horror, splatter and exploitation fare. Simple. This is a perfect example of false advertising at its most reprehensible, mostly on the part of the video company. The original ad campaign for *Blood Mania*'s theatrical release promoted it as a horror film; the one-sheet depicts a garish painting of a nude woman carrying a bloody skeleton, and the ad art shows a woman with sharpened teeth brandishing a bloody knife. (Even the opening credits boast a wonderfully cheesy animated sequence showing a pair of hands tearing at the bloody lettering, with the action accompanied by screaming.)

Sounds like a winner, right? VCI Home Video decided to take it even further. Not content with implications, they come right out and state that the film is "Rated R for Nudity and Gore." (There's not an ounce of bare skin in sight, and the "gore"—or what passes as such—consists of about forty-two frames of footage. That's just over a second's worth of grue, folks.) Furthermore, they claim (erroneously, of course) that the

film contains rape, incest, lesbianism, and—the biggest lie of all—suspense. Bull hooey. The only exploitation hereabouts is the exploitation of desperate trash fiends like ourselves.

What this talky melodrama does offer the viewer is a valid excuse to do some housecleaning while the film is running. Considering that one of the “names” behind *Blood Mania* is Peter Carpenter (the selfsame hack who brought us *Point of Terror* (1971), an equally lame drama posing as a horror film), I should’ve known not to get my expectations up. Regardless, the one-sheet poster’s a framer.

Don’t get suckered in like Yours Truly.

Devon Says...

Nothing happens for thirty minutes. Finally, a woman murders her sick father to get his money for a doctor who’s the object of her affection. Unfortunately, her sister gets everything (including the greedy doctor’s attention). Whatever will the jealous psycho sister do? Only those who’ve been severely bludgeoned with an ironing board won’t be able to guess.

Blood Mania is one of the most predictable films I’ve ever seen, and also one of the slowest. The production values are fine, the acting is okay, and maybe it would all have been passable if the script had been written by someone with the slightest sense of keeping a plot in motion. Difficult concept, that was, for the producers of 70s sleaze...

☛ Brain of Blood (1971)

Hemisphere Pictures, Inc. [USA]

DIR: Al Adamson

PRO: Al Adamson and Samuel M. Sherman

SCR: Joe van Rodgers

DOP: Louis Horvath

EXP: Kane W. Lynn

MUS: Tito Arevalo*

STR: John Bloom, Roger Engel (aka Zandor Vorkov), Regina Gelfin (aka Regina Carroll), Reed Hadley, Margo Hope, Bruce Kimball, Gus Peters, Angelo Rossitto, Ervin Saunders, Richard Smedley, Kent Taylor, Vicki Volante, and Grant Williams

AKA: The Brain

The Creature’s Revenge

Approximately 86m; Color ~~XXX~~

VID: The Brain [Regal Video; 90(86)m]

Brain of Blood

[Magnum Entertainment; 107(86)m]

ADL: A BRAIN IS A TERRIBLE THING TO WASTE!

* The soundtrack for *Brain of Blood* was primarily lifted from *The Mad Doctor of Blood Island* (1969).



A dying third-world leader has his brain transplanted into a healthy body in an attempt to cheat death. Everything goes according to plan, except that the “healthy body” suffers from a slight case of the uglies. Needless to say, he’s not too happy to awaken and find himself trapped in the body of the mad doc’s disfigured assistant Gor. (It could have been worse; he could have found himself the unlucky recipient of Regina Carroll’s perpetually sunburnt ass.) The doctor insists it’s only temporary, but I think that’s the same line he fed the women he has tied up in his basement, who—besides being unwilling blood donors in his many experiments—are taunted regularly by his sadistically-inclined dwarf assistant.

Hail, hail, the gang’s all here from Al Adamson and Sam Sherman’s brain-damaged classic *Dracula Vs. Frankenstein* (1971). Zandor (Dracula) Vorkov plays the Amir’s right hand man, John (the Frankenstein monster) Bloom lends his weight as—who else—Gor, Angelo Rossitto is the dwarf assistant (natch), and Regina Carroll, Bruce Kimball, and Ervin Saunders all lend their “talents” to what is undoubtedly another wonderful stinker from the aforementioned tag team of trash.



Brain of Blood continued...

Although not nearly as harried as *Dracula Vs. Frankenstein*, there's a little bit of everything thrown in to distract the viewer from the stock mad scientist shenanigans: Espionage-style intrigue, a car chase culminating with a car crash (oops... there goes the film's budget in one fell swoop), a battery-acid flashback, voyeurism, rubber spiders, mild gore (the nastier bloodshed supplied by stock surgery footage), a downbeat ending, and a monster who doesn't like to be touched.

They just don't make 'em like they used to... much to my chagrin.

Devon Says...

Brain of Blood opens with a still shot of a building that looks like the Taj Mahal, probably taken from a book. Evidently, the ruler of some dumb country is dying inside, and has arranged to be rushed to America upon his death so a mad doctor can revive him. American customs be damned, his servants just wrap

him up in aluminum foil and take the body to the doctor. The leader is resurrected, but—due to unforeseen complications—winds up looking like actor Michael Berryman.

This is an Al Adamson film, so yes, it's bad, but not as bad as one might expect. It has standard silliness, like Al's own sinful dwarf and a car that changes color after it explodes, but it also has some passable surgery FX, and it's fairly fast paced. This is certainly better than *Dracula vs. Frankenstein* and other Adamson efforts, but is still not the kinda' film you take home to your family, unless they are composed of weirdoes like Scott.

Corruption (1967)

Titan Film Distributors Ltd. [UK]

DIR: Robert Hartford-Davis

PRO: Peter Newbrook

SCR: Derek Ford and Donald Ford

DOP: Peter Newbrook

AST: Ken Boffley

EFX: Michael Albrechtsen

MUS: Bill McGuffie

STR: Diana Ashley, Victor Baring, Anthony Booth, Peter Cushing, Alexandra Dane, Vanessa Howard, Sue Lloyd, David Lodge, Phillip Manikum, Billy Murray, Kate O'Mara, Shirley Stelfox, Noel Trevarthen, Valerie van Ost, Wendy Varnals, and Jan Waters

AKA: Carnage

Laser Killer

Approximately 86m; Color

Peter Cushing is a gifted surgeon who... no, this isn't a Hammer flick. Trust me. Anyway, after finding himself responsible for an accident which disfigures his wife to be, he decides to take some drastic measures in trying to restore her... no, this isn't *Les Yeux sans Visage*, so shuddup, willya'? As I was saying, he robs cadavers of their pituitary glands, convinced that their "endocrines will promote tissue growth" and help rejuvenate his true love's horribly scarred pucker. Add a laser into the mix, and he's got a sure pinch cure for the uglies. But—having reached success only thirty minutes into the film—we know *something's gotta' go wrong, right?* Sure 'nuff.

This is one of Cushing's seedier—if not his seediest—horror outing in a career that damn near stretches over four decades. (More surprising still is that Columbia Pictures distributed this flick, at least in the good old U.S. of A.) There are some pretty brutal and bloody scenes, as well as some gratuitous nudity, both of which had yet to become commonplace in the 70s. (There's no mistaking the decade, though, with all of the dated 60s conventions.) And despite the oft-formulaic

approach, *Corruption* seems to completely switch gears every time we—the viewer—seem to get a handle on the proceedings. (One would almost wonder if it's a couple of different films spliced together *ala* Al Adamson had it not been seamless.)

A rarity in its uncut form, *Corruption* is worth searching out, by both Cushing fans and devotees of gratuitous 60s horror fare.

Devon Says...

Much to my dismay, this movie is *not* about mutant cannibals terrorizing a subway system. I guess I had the title mixed up with something else. So, while I didn't get Christopher Plummer battling freaks, I *did* get a pseudo Mad Doctor flick from England. (Argh!) Peter Cushing stars as a man who digs this model, gets in a fight with her photographer, ends up scarring her, and is then caught in a Phantom of the Opera (*ala* Robert Englund) style situation where he has to keep reconstructing her face. Unfortunately, the procedure calls for some gland that Cushing has to behead people to get. I believe this movie was cut for its US release (but then again, I also believed it was about subway monsters), and what was probably missing is the somewhat grisly killing of a hooker. The FX are okay, and it was probably considered quite grotesque at the time. Personally, I found the close up shots of ol' Pete with Einstein-esque hair much more grotesque.

Despite being British, this motion picture was okay, although the ending was pretty stupid. Perhaps the whole thing would fare better as an Anchor Bay release, but I also don't really feel it deserves an elaborate presentation like that; not while The Crater Lake Monster is still out of print, at any rate.

My big question actually pertains to the title(s). The movie is called *Corruption*, but who is corrupt? Cushing is a serial killing scientist going insane, but he's not really a corrupt doctor. He only uses his doctor status once to obtain the gland, and so while that is corrupt, the whole movie isn't really about corruption, thus the title is unwarranted. The movie is also known as *Laser Killer*, which makes even *less* sense. Cushing only uses the laser for the surgery, and until the end of the movie, it's not even a threat to anyone, and even then it's just because it gets bumped and starts shooting up the room. It's like Billy Corgan's dad was selecting the titles or something.

☛ Curse of the Headless Horseman (1970)

DLM Film [USA]

DIR: Leonard Kirtman (*aka* John Kirkland)

PRO: Kenn Riche

SCR: Kenn Riche



DOP: Henning Schellerup

SFX: Harry Wollmen

STR: Rachel Bard, Rich Brinkley, Lee Byers, Robert Callahan, Don Carrara, Jefferson Clarke, Tom Clarke, Joe Cody, Stephen d'Amico, Margo Dean, B.G. Fisher, Artie Gonzales, Jacqueline Gonzales, Timothy A. Grace, Lorelie, Bill Matthias, Gina Michaels, Robert Moss, Randy Ormalez, Neil Perlman, Rebecca Perlman, Marland Proctor, Claudia Ream, Lydia Rosenbloom, Ray Saniger, and Ultra Violet

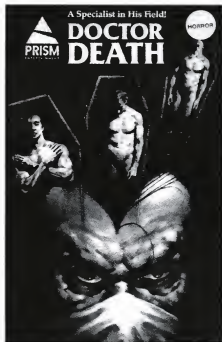
AKA: Valley of the Headless Horseman

Approximately 69m; Color

VID: Curse of the Headless Horseman
[Cult Video; 70(69)m]

ADL: Phantastic Phantom Fear!

An unconvincingly "hip" doctor ("Can you dig it?") inherits his late uncle's ranch on the condition he can turn a tidy profit in six months time. He drags along a gaggle of hippie cronies for free labor, but their plans are constantly interrupted by the strange goings-on. The



that she has some range as an actress.) Furthermore, if the slipshod proceedings don't put you to sleep, the stale narration should do the trick.

Even with the mild gore, bouncing rubber heads, and colored filters used to simulate an acid trip, trash fiends could find something better with which to occupy their time. (Hey, I spent fifteen years looking for this film, and although I don't regret finding it, I do feel cheated for having sat through it twice. Hmmm... if the copyright's lapsed, maybe I should remarket Curse of the Headless Horseman as a Home Lobotomizing Kit. Oh, the possibilities.)

Devon Says...

Who needed Sleepy Hollow when this was available on video? I was actually eager to view this film when Scott handed it to me because I foolishly assumed it would pertain to Ichabod Crane, but soon found out that it was a really stupid mystery/western with some appalling voice-over narration set in modern times at a tourist trap ranch. Keeping up with the tradition of this issue, there is a shit load of wandering in this movie. People wander around to the ranch, near the ranch, on the ranch, but no one ever really does anything. Essentially, a bunch of (presumably) smelly people decide to work on a ranch, and then a headless horseman begins to splash some of them with blood. As I said, it is not the legendary pumpkin-headed fiend, but rather some stupid ghost riding a mangy horse because eight cowboys shot each other or something.

Now, here's the tricky part... there's gold on the ranch, and one of the stinky people finds it and—since there's already a cranium-less wonder about—he tries to scare the other soap deprived people away pretending he's the headless horseman. Yes, even though there's already one horseman lurking, he feels another will scare everyone off. He, of course, looks really fake. However, the "real" headless horseman ain't any better, plodding along on nights that look brighter than those in F.W. Murnau's Nosferatu. It is revealed that that wasn't a real headless horseman either, but someone else trying to scare people away. However, the ending says that there really is a supernatural headless horseman, so who the fuck knows which horseman did what? It all just seems like a poorly written Scooby Doo episode to me.

🕯 Doctor Death—Seeker of Souls (1972)

Freedom Arts Picture Corporation [USA]

DIR: Eddie Saeta

PRO: Eddie Saeta

SCR: Sal Ponti

DOP: Emil Oster and Kent Wakeford

VFX: Van der Veer Photo

Curse of the Headless Horseman continued...

caretaker, Solomon, (by far, the creepiest part of the film) chalks it up to the headless horseman, who seems content with spattering his victims with blood from his own decapitated head.

This film may barely clock in at a little over an hour, but believe you me, it's a looong sixty-nine minutes. This ultra-cheap quickie was made by Leonard Kirtman under a pseudonym to double-bill with his superior trash flick Carnival of Blood, which he churned out the selfsame year. (He also directed porn under the pseudonym of "Leon Gucci", but I've been lucky enough to have been spared anything he made to which someone might attach the word "erotica".) Despite the fact that there is a script (an honest attempt to create a mystery, predictable as the outcome may be), the film reeks of bored hippies too stoned to realize that just because something is captured on film does not mean that it's interesting. (Most of the acting is convincing if only because no one has the chops to play anyone but themselves. The only exception is Ultra Violet, who—unfortunately—has been deluded into thinking

MUS: Richard la Salle
 STR: Sivi Aberg, Leon Askin, Robert Ball, Anna Bernard, Barbara Boles, Eric Boles, Jim Boles, Barry Coe, John Considine, Denise Denise, Patrick Dennis-Leigh, Pierre Gonneau, Lin Henson, Jeffrey Herman, Moe Howard, Athena Lorde, Florence Marly, Cheryl Miller, Joe Morrow, Stewart Moss, Larry Rogers, Larry Vincent, and Leon Williams
 AKA: Dr. Death
 Approximately 89m; Color
 VID: Doctor Death [Prism Entertainment; 90(89)m]
 ADL: *To Make Them Whole, He Needs Your Soul!*

Obsessed with bringing his dead wife back to life, a desperate man employs the dubious talents of a doctor who claims he can do just that. Despite some rather tasteless stage theatrics, our title conjurer turns out to be the real McCoy... but even he has his limits. When the good doctor finds himself unable to come through for the bereaved husband, the man decides to call it quits. But not the persistent doctor, nosiree; he's determined to hold up his end of the bargain, even if it means killing every woman in the city in order to make it so.

Despite a slow start, *Doctor Death—Seeker of Souls* actually manages to prove itself rather enjoyable once the hokum kicks in. In light of the low budget, the production values are quite passable (comparable to what could be found in made-for-TV films from the same time), and the script offers some commendable tongue-in-cheek humor. (The better jokes are actually stabs at horror films, which—although effective—makes one wonder where the filmmakers' loyalties lie.) Gore is sparse, but the splatter effects are quite gruesome when they do surface. (And some ugly faces they are, with a nasty decap and a time-lapse meltdown, the latter of which could have done without the superimposed flames.)

Keep an eye out for Moe Howard (of Three Stooges fame) as a participating audience member.

Would make an accommodating double-bill with *Love Me Deadly* (1972). Oh, the sideburns...

Devon Says...

I think this issue of GICK! should be subtitled "The Stewart Moss Special." If Scott includes *In Harm's Way*, we'll probably be covering his entire cinematic career. Maybe we could even create a limited edition version autographed by Stewie, as he's presumably not busy right now.

Anyway, this movie is great. Yep, great, even though it's in GICK! It's not a good horror movie, of

course, but it's funnier than hell. A man's quest to resurrect his wife leads him to Dr. Death, a man who has survived for centuries by leaping from one body to another. (Never mind the fact that the body he enters has generally just suffered severe trauma and would presumably just re-keel over; he does fine.)

See the séance in which a young man does not wish to talk to his departed grandmother! See head Stooze Moe Howard copping a necromantic feel! See a homosexual seeking out the ultimate sex change! The sense of humor that is so prevalent makes the whole movie seem like it's a tongue-in-cheek joke, so when characters state the obvious or do stupid things, it's intentionally comical for a change.

There are a few inspired nightmarish moments when the widower visits a society of the dead where people look like Templar Knights and a kooky old man resembling Santa laughs a lot, but overall, this is a comedy. Just ignore the bad 70s teledrama score...

Fascination (1979)

Les Films ABC [France]

and Comex Productions [France]

DIR: Jean Rollin
 PRO: Joe de Lara
 SCR: Jean Rollin
 DOP: Jean-Claude Couty
 MUS: Philippe d'Aram
 STR: Agnes Bert, Joe de Lara, Vincent Gardair, Dominique Journet, Jean-Marie Lemaire, Fanny Magier, Franka Mai, Jacques Marboeuf, Muriel Montossé, Sophie Noel, Bernard Papineau, Alain Plumey, Jacques Sansoul, Cathy Stewart, Evelyne Thomas, Brigitte van Meerhaegue, (aka Brigitte Lahaie) and Myriam Watteau
 AKA: Filles Traquées [Hunted Girls]
 Night of the Cruel Sacrifice

Approximately 80m; Color

VID: Fascination [Redemption Video (PAL); 78m; In French w/English subs; LBX]
 Fascination [Video Search of Miami; 76m; In French w/English subs; LBX]

A thief holes up in a desolate chateau, hiding from his jilted cohorts in crime. There he comes across two women who are waiting for the owners to arrive, and who waste no time in initiating a series of mind games. Once their hosts arrive, the robber and his cronies find out—much to their chagrin—that these people have some rather odd tastes.

Although *Fascination* is yet another "vampire" film from a director who just can't seem to get enough of them, *Fascination* itself is inspired not by European folklore, but by factual cases concerning blood fetishism.



Fascination continued...

(Specifically, the historical evidence of aristocratic cults whose impetus is the drinking of fresh blood, preferably human. The socio-political subtext is unmistakable, taking this film into territories where Rollin's earlier efforts rarely tread, at least successfully.) The lack of a fantastical basis also helps to ground the film, making it that much more visceral than his earlier work.

Not as lyrically haunting as *La Morte Vivante* [*The Living Dead Girl*] (1982), this film is nonetheless memorable, walking the selfsame fine line between art and exploitation with its lush photography, socio-political subtexts, and gratuitous sex and violence. Unlike the later film, the gore is more restrained, hence more successful in its execution. (Neither Rollin films or French cinema in general is known for their groundbreaking effects work; with his more splatter-oriented productions, the effects are usually quite lacking, imminently hindering his films from reaching their potential as truly good films.) Sex is—as is the violence—a crucial part of the proceedings, and—like in many of his films—indivisible. (Rape seems to be a

common theme, and would seem to be a euphemism if it wasn't handled no differently than sleazy titillation. This seems odd in that the strongest, and—at the very least—the most sympathetic characters in all of his films are of the female persuasion.)

To quote one of the film's characters "People like us are called sick... degenerates. But it's not fair... no, we are just different." One can't help but wonder if Rollin was speaking of himself and his fans.

Highly recommended.

Devon Says...

What could be better than a movie with French lesbian vampires? A movie with French lesbian vampires directed by Jean Rollin, duh.

Scott's copy is letterboxed and subtitled but I'm not sure that it is better than some of the boots out there. Scott has the official Video Search of Miami release version, and while they did make a nice cover for it, subtitle it, and shot an intro with Rollin, apparently no one saw the need for a decent print of the film.

Why is this so important? Jean Rollin is one of the few directors with whose work I find print quality essential. His images are often stunning, but normally only when they are not faded. The way shots are set up, color is often vital, so saying whether this movie is worth watching or not is very difficult. I often found myself saying, "That would look so cool in color." Some images, however, still survive. Both Lahie's eyes behind the scythe—which was used on the cover—and much of the finale are still visually impressive. I'd recommend getting the remastered *The Living Dead Girl*, released on laserdisc in Europe a few years back, to fully partake of Rollin's richly colored textures. This print of *Fascination* won't give you that opportunity.

The story in *Fascination* is good, the French guy who looks like Alex from *A Clockwork Orange* is cool, the castle location is excellent, and there *are* French lesbian vampires, but the print severely detracted from my viewing pleasure. So, if you find a nice copy, check it out. If you've never seen a Jean Rollin film and can get the Video Search version *really* cheap, take a look. It's certainly a great example of a good, low-budget genre film, and if Anchor Bay ever creates a Rollin line, this movie will make a nice addition to any video collection.

To recap: Copy bad, movie good. When copy good, movie great.

Garden of the Dead (1972)

Millennium Productions [USA]

DIR: John Hayes

PRO: H.A. Milton

SCR: John Hayes*

MF: Joe Blasco
SFX: Richard Helmer
STR: Erwing Berlin, Chuy Castro, Susan Charney, Greg Cooper, David Copperman, John Dennis, Jack Driscoli, John Dullaghan, Carmen Filpi, Lee Frost, Ted Frost, Virgil Frye, Jerome Guardino, Burk Halter, Phil Kenneally, Morton Lewis, Robert Linder, Rod Manilla, Ronald Marriot, Duncan McCloud, John Piazzi, Marland Proctor, Nick Raymond, Lewis Sterling, Eric Stern, Tony Vorno, John Willard, and Avil Williams
AKA: Tomb of the Undead
 Approximately 58m; Color
VID: Garden of the Dead [Neon Video; 58m]
 Tomb of the Undead [Video Bancorp; 58m]
ADL: DEATH WAS THE ONLY LIVING THING...

* Various sources also cite Daniel Cady, John Jones and/or Jack Matcha as screenwriters.

The Department of Corrections decide to close down a prison work camp, reassigning everyone but the hard-as-nails warden whose unsympathetic stance has become obsolete. When not busting their butts, the convicts incarcerated therein hide out behind an old work shed huffing formaldehyde and planning their escape. When they do make a break for it, they're gunned down for their troubles in an old graveyard. Being a cheap-assed zombie flick, they don't stay buried long, though. Armed with pickaxes, the resuscitated corpses make their way back to camp, intent on killing everyone in sight and making short work of the drums of formaldehyde to which they've become addicted; no longer satisfied with sniffing it, they begin guzzling it by the gallon, even bathing in it. ("We must have the liquid back at the camp... we will destroy the living." At least they have their priorities straight.)

Being not even an hour long, there isn't much of a film on which to comment. The cut-rate prison film staples are barely underway once the Night of the Living Dead-style proceedings are introduced. The characters are cardboard cut-outs, at best, and the plot devices ludicrous, so any tension or chills this film may have hoped to create are not to be felt by anyone more than seven years of age. The special effects—reminiscent of Alan Ormsby and Bob Clark's superior gut-muncher *Children Shouldn't Play with Dead Things*—is nothing more than hastily applied greasepaint. (With the exception of one interesting and reasonably innovative "meltdown" sequence, the result of the zombies' aversion to light.) And how do the cornered victims dispatch the ghoulies? By taking advantage of their blueballs, of course.

Do not let yourself be fooled by the cool artwork gracing Neon Video's display clamshell packaging; al-



though *Garden of the Dead* may hold some interest for the more desperate trash fiends, even indiscriminate zombie fans will have a tough time tackling these fifty-eight minutes.

It's probably safe to assume that actor Lee Frost is the same Lee Frost who directed and produced a slough of engaging and influential exploitation flicks, although even he may avoid putting this turkey on his résumé.

Devon Says...

I used to own this film. It was under a different name, I think, but I don't know what it was. I watched it once then gave it away, I think to Scott. Maybe this used to be my copy. No, I'm pretty sure it was a different name. And let's examine the name. A garden can be a lush thing. A thing of beauty, with lively plants about, pretty colors everywhere. But, a garden belonging to the dead would probably not be well kept. Why am I writing all this garbage? Because the less said about a stupid movie where prisoners are kept in by a fence that



Nicklous, George Selin, Doug Senior, Carol Silverman, Steve Singer, Lyle Steven, Toni Telo, Guerdon Trueblood, Guerdon Trueblood XIV, Dawna Walden, Ollie West, Woody Wise, Carol Wood, Ed Wood, and Charles Woodard

AKA: Evil Force

Meatcleaver Massacre

Revenge of the Dead

Approximately 84m; Color

VID: Meatcleaver Massacre

[Catalina Home Video; 85(84)m]

ADL: *Four crazed killers butchered his Wife, Son and Daughter. From his hospital deathbed he called upon the POWER OF THE OCCULT for Revenge... And he got it, he REALLY got it! (Talk about a descriptive tagline. Sheesh. The Editor.)*

As implied by the adline, four losers who somehow managed to scrape up college tuition off their professor's family. (Although Catalina's promotional department callously forget to mention the senseless murder of the family's dog Poopers. How could they forget Poopers?) The teacher survives, but is left a seemingly brain-dead paraplegic. He summons the spirit of Morak, the Great Avenger, a Gaelic devil god that goes about dispatching the filthy lot. (Yes, sometimes with a meatcleaver. Or at least I *think* he used a meatcleaver. The film is still a blur, to be quite honest with you.)

In both an introduction and an afterword that were obviously tacked on after the fact by a distributor who realized just what a lousy film this was, Christopher Lee graciously sacrifices all credibility and jabbars on about the supernatural, trying to give the film's hokey storyline some historical credence. (Unfortunately, this extra seven minutes does nothing more than lull the viewer into something of a stupor, preparing them for the thankless task at hand.) Not that this low-rent shocker doesn't have its perks—an oppressive atmosphere, a very energetic soundtrack, and some gratuitous kneaded nipple shots—but the wooden direction, inept editing, unsympathetic characters, and laughable story make it a long eighty-four minutes indeed.

Fans of The Demon Lover may get some mileage out of this, but everyone else may want to continue relegating Hollywood Meat Cleaver Massacre to the pits of obscurity.

C'mon... Poopers?

Devon Says...

Competing with *Corruption* for the most inaccurately titled movie ever is *Meat Cleaver Massacre*. I mean, I gathered from the title that there would be some

Garden of the Dead continued...

wouldn't detain a miniature horse and turn themselves to zombies with formaldehyde, the better.

Hollywood Meat Cleaver Massacre (1976)

Cine Repertory Group, Inc. [USA]

DIR: Evan Lee

PRO: Ray Atherton

SCR: Ray Atherton and Keith Burns

DOP: Guerdon Trueblood

EXP: Julie Ellen Fine

MF: Don Ling

MUS: Joe Azarello, Gary Ray, Ed Scannell, Steve Singer, and Jay Stewart

STR: Jim Bagdonas, Alisa Beaton, Robert Clark, J. Arthur Craig, Dorian Crane, John de Rose, Doug Ely, Miklos Gyulai, James Habif, Undine Hampton, Ken Horne, Larry Justin, Marge Kazan, Paul Kelleher, Lisette Kramer, Christopher Lee, Don Ling, Bob Mead, Phil Meyer, Drew Michael, Pat Nagel, Natasha, Ellen

sort of mass slaughter caused by a psycho with a meat cleaver. But, no, "meat cleaver massacre" evidently translates as something entirely different. In fact only one of the murders involves a cutting instrument of any kind, and that's with a knife.

Although there is no meat cleaver massacre, there is some bloodshed. It also has Christopher Lee book-ending the film with some talk of ethereal stuff and a poem about medicine men. And it has one of those damn "Did it really happen?" endings like *Corruption*.

Some people should not be allowed to have cameras.

🍷 The Hollywood Strangler Meets the Skid Row Slasher (1978)

Ciné Paris Films, Ltd. [USA]

DIR: Ray Dennis Steckler (aka Wolfgang Schmidt)

PRO: Ray Dennis Steckler (aka Carol Flynn)

SCR: Ray Dennis Steckler (aka Christopher Edwards)

DOP: Ray Dennis Steckler (aka Sven Christian)

EXP: Dutch Niemann

MUS: Henri Price and Alberto Sarno

STR: Pierre Agostino, Chuck Alford, Denise Alford, Carolyn Brandt, Forrest Duke, April Grant, Joanne Hiatt, John Leeman, Trish Lopes, Lori Morris, Jim Parker, P.J. Parker, Jean Roberts, Snowy Sinclair, and Bonnie Smith

AKA: Hollywood Strangler
The Model Killer

Approximately 71m; Color

VID: The Hollywood Strangler Meets the Skid Row Slasher [Active Home Video; 72(71)m]
The Hollywood Strangler Meets the Skid Row Slasher [Program Releasing Corp.; 72(70)m]
The Model Killer [Regal Video; 88(64)m]

ADL: WAIT TILL HE GETS HIS HANDS ON YOU!

A shutterbug (Pierre Agostino) winds up throttling his models at the end of their risqué photo shoots. ("She's no different than all the rest," he thinks to himself in anticipation.) While he spends his days wandering from one apartment to the next thinning the herd, the owner of a local used bookstore spends her off hours at night swathing a path through the homeless community. Eventually, their paths cross, and it's love at first sight. (Well, not really... he walks in her store and offers a stone-faced stare whenever he's in the area, and she repays his affection in kind.) Eventually, they decide to break the ice, and kill each other off in their respective trademarked styles. End of movie.

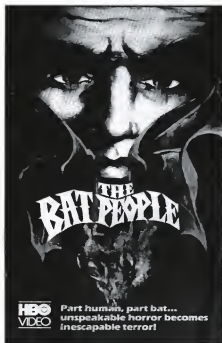
Jesus creeping shit... we've really stepped in some stinkers this issue, haven't we. I can deal with the fact that—even as far as many low-budget films are con-



cerned—these are scraping bottom, but do they all have to be explicitly boring to boot?

As for the production values (which have little inherent value), *Hollywood Strangler's* most notable detriment has to be the abysmal post-synch dubbing. Through much of the film, we are graciously allowed to hear the killer's thoughts during his sopor-ridden modeling shoots. Unfortunately, this is just slapped over the models' inane pitter-patter, also dubbed in all of its low-rent glory. What we then get is something akin to dueling banjos, the music replaced with the most embarrassing dialogue this side of Ed Wood, Jr. (Sans any unintentional humor, lucky us.)

Most of the film's action consists of our anti-hero wandering around Hollywood aimlessly, or petting pigeons. Sex and violence—oh so important to the profound storyline—is relegated to unimpressive nudity (plentiful as it may be) and about two and a half gallons of red paint. The only thing, and I mean the only thing in this flick that I felt inclined to pay attention to were some of the props; every available wall—in the book store, in the models' apartments, wherever—is adorned



The Hollywood Strangler continued...

with what are some now vintage movie memorabilia. (With such titles as *Teenage Massage Parlor*, *Paranoia*, and *Teenage Hustler*, it's probably safe to assume that they came out of Steckler's own collection.) Nice as they are, it's not worth letting one's finger off the fast forward button in fear of getting a taste of the inevitable tedium to follow.

A truly pointless endeavor.

Devon Says...

Just when I think Scott has shown me the worst movie ever released, he gives me this. *The Hollywood Strangler* is the touching story of a scorned man who's killed his significant other and is looking for a new, sensitive, caring life partner within the photograph-it-yourself porn industry. Of course, every time he comes over to snap a few shots, his model doesn't meet his moral expectations, so he kills her. (What a nifty way to ensure several scenes of naked women being slain, although some of the victims do manage to keep their

tops on.) Our hero, I guess, becomes attracted to a woman who runs a used bookstore (which has like five books to its name). Evidently, he is sensing a kindred spirit, as she has a penchant for knifing street drunks. She is apparently psychic, too, as she can find the drunks long after they've left her line of sight.

While this might make for a funny black comedy in competent hands, here it is wretchedly boring. And this is another one of those goddamn movies where the sound is recorded afterwards, with slightly more regard to synchronicity than, let's say, *Dracula*, *The Dirty Old Man*. So, there's very little on screen dialogue, none in close up, and most of the talking is supplied by voice-over narration. (The male killer's voice sounds much younger than the guy playing him looks, which is very disorienting.)

This was put out by Regal, who loved to release so-bad-it's-funny stuff; unfortunately, this film just isn't funny, it's depressing. An hour could only seem longer if it was spent with Garrison Keillor.

🦇 It Lives by Night (1974)

Eastborne Productions, Inc. [USA]

DIR: Jerry Jameson

PRO: Lou Shaw

SCR: Lou Shaw

DOP: Matthew Leonetti

EXP: Nicolas Jenna and Matthew Leonetti

MXF: Stan Winston

SFX: Tony Urbano

VFX: Howard A. Anderson Co.

MUS: Artie Kane

STR: Robert Berk, Paul Carr, Pat Delaney, Laurie Brooks Jefferson, Jennifer Kulik, Marianne McAndrew, Stewart Moss, Michael Pataki, George Paulsin, Arthur Space, and Ronnie van Dyke

AKA: *The Bat People*
It's Alive

Approximately 92m; Color

VID: *The Bat People* [HBO Video; 95(92)m]

ADL: *Part human, part bat...*

unspeakable horror becomes inescapable terror!

While spelunking, a biologist desperately trying to secure a grant is bitten by a seemingly ordinary bat. Following the incident, the biologist's honeymoon is interrupted by him having seizures, accompanied by hallucinations of bats. (The selfsame footage is used in the credits sequence, and utilizes footage of real live bats being held by their wings—offscreen, of course—and stuffed into the camera's eye. Although they probably weren't hurt, they look none too pleased about their cinematic debut.) The biologist's wife is thinking rabies,

but we—the viewers—are privy to his malady, which is much hairier than even she suspects.

And you thought shit like this only happens in the comics. (Even the proceedings are played out like a low-rent comic book story; the screenplay is succinct, with very few steps taken to expound on anything but the most necessary of details.) The production values are about on par with made-for-television films from the time: Capably made, but dry as a bone. The make-up effects (supplied by a young "Stanley Winston") are pretty good considering, but the director makes the mistake of letting the camera dwell on the rubber prosthetics far too long for them to be truly effective.

For trash fiends, we have bats being dubbed by the screeching of eagles, some mild gore, a transformation in *flagrante*, and something of a cheerfully downbeat ending.

Despite its faults, *It Lives by Night* boasts that inexplicable charm inherent to most monster flicks from the early 1970s.

Devon Says...

The label says The Bat People, the print says The Bat People, but I say it should be The Bat Person since it's only one guy that goes... uhm... you know. When I noticed Stan Winston did the special effects I got pretty excited, eager for a huge bat monster. Well, there isn't one, really.

A honeymooning couple go on a tour in a cave, wander off to do it all for the nookie and fall into a crack. While down there, the guy is bitten by a bat, with fairly predictable results. The movie isn't really slow, but the plot isn't all that exciting. What actually made it stand out for me was that it was something like a cross between a vampire and werewolf movie. After being bitten, the victim begins drinking blood—naturally—but he actually metamorphosizes into a creature that looks more like a werewolf. (His transformation is one I associate with a curse more lupine in nature as well.)

Not a bad creature feature, but the moral seems to be: If you are bitten by a flying rat and turn into man-bat, your wife will kill the cop on your trail and come live with you in a cave.

🐾 Jack el Distripador de Londres

[Jack the Ripper of London] (1971)

Cinefilms S.L. [Spain]

and International Apollo Film [Italy]

DIR: José Luis Madrid

PRO: José Luis Madrid

SCR: Jacinto Molina Alvarez, Tito Carpi,
and José Luis Madrid

DOP: Diego Ubieda

MUS: Piero Piccioni

STR: Jacinto Molina Alvarez, Enrique Beltran, Franco Borelli, Alfonso Castizio, Orchidea de Santis, Victor Iregua, Patricia Loran, Maika, Renzo Marignano, Irene Mir, Paloma Moreno, Miguel Minuesa, Isidoro Novellas, Antonio Ramis, Andres Resino, Carmen Roger, Teresita-Castizio, and Victor Vilanova

AKA: Jack the Ripper

Sette Cadaveri per Scotland Yard

[Seven Murders for Scotland Yard]

Approximately 83m; Color

A series of Ripper-like murders points to horror star Paul Naschy (*né* Jacinto Molina Alvarez), here an ex-circus performer who wakes up after a drunken binge and finds himself snuggled up alongside a dead prostitute, with the cops knocking at his door, no less. (The real killer—obviously not Naschy—likes to cut out his victims' hearts, storing them in big ol' pickle jars. When time allows, he goes about taunting police, even sending them the head of one of his unfortunate victims in a hatbox. Hey, it's the *thought* that counts.)

Not one of his more engaging efforts, this Naschy vehicle is typical low-rent Spanish horror fare, with all of the *giallo* trappings intact. The proceedings are fairly uninteresting, not excluding the murders, despite the fact they are invariably punctuated by close-ups of gaping—but not always bloody—stab wounds.

Highly obscure, but not worth the trouble it would take to track it down. (Especially considering that I have yet to find an English print.)

Devon Says...

I use to buy bootlegs—oh, sorry, tapes from "one collector to another"—so I know how bad the films available only in that format can be. When I saw that this tape had come from Scott's bestest buddy of a bootlegger, I naturally prepared for the worst. But, it was in Italian and not subtitled, so I really don't know how bad the story is.

The movie opens with a lady of the night getting knifed (evidently a rubbermade lady of the night), but then we get to see... Paul Naschy!!! Oh, boy! Naschy—lookin' very much like John Belushi—plays a former trapeze artist who had to quit when he severely injured his knee... rolling off a safety net after a show.

Naschy is a PI or a cop or something—one of the little plot details that went left unknown due to my lack of fluency in Italian—who someone is setting up to look like the murderer. Naschy drinks Vat 69, there's a princess prostitute (all the Italian I know went into that



Jack el Distripador de Londres continued...

translation) who is slain, and some dude with black hair is copycating the Ripper murders. Would I know much more about the story if it'd been in English? Well, given that it's a Naschy movie, probably not. Generally people watch Naschy either for the violence (of which the knifing is pretty much it) or for his character of El Homely Lobo. No drool or hair here. That's all right, because it does have the most empa-thetic pain inducing footage of a knee blowout ever... right off that net.

At least a two foot drop, it was.

🕷 Kiss of the Tarantula (1972)

Cinema-Vu Productions [USA]

DIR: Chris Munger

PRO: Daniel Cady

SCR: Warren Hamilton, Jr.

DOP: Henning Schellerup

EXP: Curt Brady and John Holokan

MUS: Phyllan Bishop

STR: John Burrows, R.C., Jared Davis, Beverly Eddins, W. James Eddins, Rebecca Eddins, Susan Eddins, Rita French, George Gingell, William Guhl, Patricia Landon, Art Lane, Stratton Leopold, Suzanne Ling, Eric Mason, Jay Spatz, Ronald Prather, Mark Smith, Linda Spatz, Mary Tyree, and Herman Wallner

AKA: *Shudder*

Approximately 84m; Color

VID: Kiss of the Tarantula

[Maljack Productions, Inc.; 89(84)m]

ADL: *So silent... So deadly... So final*

Susan, who has an unnatural affinity for spiders, decides to throw a monkey wrench into her step-mother's plans, who—along with her uncle—conspire to kill the girl's father. With a little help from her pet tarantula, the widow-in-training is quickly dispatched, with no one the wiser. Years later and all grown up, Daddy's little girl boasts a whole menagerie of furry arthropods, which she uses to not only fight off her uncle's incestuous advances, but to exact revenge on her sadistic peers. (Hey, with his being a mortician, she's drumming up business for her father, to boot.)

This charming, above-par thriller has often been compared to Willard, but *Kiss of the Tarantula* is not just another copycat riding the coattails of another film's success. (Save that denouncement for such killer animal flicks as *Rattlers*, and even the inevitable sequel *Ben*.) Despite—or maybe in spite of—the low budget, *Kiss of the Tarantula* is an exemplary horror film that succeeds on numerous levels. (Except for it's making tarantulas out to be highly venomous spiders, a misrepresentation that's obvious to anyone who's done even the scantiest reading on them.) The film is consistently engaging, thanks to both the cast and the script. (It's interesting to note that all of the morbidly-attuned characters are the most sympathetic, while the "normals" aren't.) The production values occasionally suffer (under and over-exposed photography being the film's most noticeable shortcomings) and in many ways—the score, the photography, even the overall tone—are reminiscent of Frank Henenlotter's *Basketcase*, made a decade later. And it even boasts a disturbing ending: God bless the seventies.

Recommended for fans of vintage low-budget horror fare.

Devon Says...

This movie operates on one simple premise: If you are touched by a tarantula, you will die. Whether it be by heart failure or simply crushing yourself in panic, the unwanted touch of this "deadly" spider is fatal. And

while this idea might be frightening to arachnophobes, it left me in a state of utter boredom.

☛ Legacy of Horror (1978)

Ken Lane Films [USA]

DIR: Andy Milligan

PRO: George Burke and Don Reese

SCR: Andy Milligan

STR: Eve Adamson, Walter Ballester, Peter Barcia, Elaine Boies, Jack Boies, Jason Boies, Lisa Boies, Chris Broderick, Kathryn Capofari, Jeannie Cusick, Joe Downing, Bob Elia, ouise Gallanda, Dan Handley, Dale Hansen, Fred Keller, Kathryn Kilss, Ann Ogilvie, artin Reymert, Charles Richards, John Schiumo, Stanley Schwartz, Lynn Snyder, Sherri Snyder, John Tarantino, Marilee Troncone, and Carla Wentworth

AKA: Legacy of Blood
Approximately 83m; Color

VID: Legacy of Horror
[Maljack Productions, Inc.; 82(83)m]

ADL: THINK OF YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE...
IT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN AGAIN

Hey, has everyone out there seen the Andy Milligan film *The Ghastly Ones* by now? If so, I'll save you the effort of having to rent this turkey by letting you know that *Legacy of Horror* is a remake of said film from 1967, sans much—if not all—of its exploitive charms. Many references have claimed that *Legacy of Horror* is a sanitized retelling of Milligan's earlier effort, due to the fact that all prints in circulation are bereft of the trademarked sex and violence that has punctuated nearly every film in the director's long career. Although titillation was probably not part of his agenda this time out, the existing prints do bear the telltale signs of censoring during any and all scenes of violence. (Granted, some of the murders may not warrant a great deal of bloodshed, but it's pretty obvious that we're missing a fair amount of *something*.) No naughty bits, very little red stuff... this sucker would have a hard time warranting a PG rating even in today's politically correct climate.

For those who haven't had the displeasure in stepping in the mess that was this film's source material, both productions deal with a predictable inheritance plot that involves two spinster sisters, their retarded brother, and a group of relatives that must spend three days on their to-be-inherited estate to make any claims on the goods.

Even for Milligan enthusiasts, this is a tough one to sit through. Production values may be a notch above *The Ghastly Ones*, but at least that film wasn't wholly



uninteresting. We spend almost half of the film waiting for the gosh darn reading of the will (despite the fact we already know what it says before anyone even utters a word of it), then have to wait until the last twenty minutes just to witness some uninspired murders. (Apparently, the actors are just as numbed by the whole ordeal as are the viewers. One gentleman looks none too perturbed while being crucified to the wall; the pitchfork thrust into his neck and hatchet job he receives don't elicit much of a response from him either.)

As with every other no-budget Milligan epic, stock music and anachronisms abound. But, hey, there's some nice costuming and sets. (Zzzzzz...)

It's outings like this that make me feel ashamed of liking this man's work.

Devon Says...

Some movies never seem to go *anywhere*; I've seen parts of *The English Patient*, so I am aware of this. I also know that I've complained about characters' meanderings in this issue... but leave it to Milligan to make



Legacy of Horror continued...

all the other scenes of people doing nothing look like *The Killer*.

There are nine people in this movie, and for forty-five minutes these characters are "developed." Then they all gather so a will can be read; at this point, the legacy kicks in, and some people start dying. Finally, some things happen that could not have been captured with a static shot. (This includes a finale that surely inspired Peter Jackson, as the killer's demise mirrors that of the knife thrower in *Meet The Feebles*.)

Could be considered a valid form of entertainment to those prone to beating their own heads with large crescent wrenches.

La Mansión de los Muertos Vivientes [The Mansion of the Living Dead] (1982)

Golden Films Internacional, S.A. [Spain]

DIR: Jesús Franco Manera

PRO: Emilio Larraga

SCR: Jesús Franco Manera

[Based on a novel by D. Khunne]

DOP: Juan Soler Cozar (aka Joan Almirall)

MUS: Daniel J White (aka Pablo Villa)

STR: María del Carmen Nieto (aka Mami Kaplan), Mabel Escañó, Albino Graziani, Eva León, Antonio Mayans (aka Robert Foster), Lina Romay (aka Candy Coster), and Elisa Valero (aka Jasmina Bell)

AKA: La Sex de les Vivantes Mortes

[The Sex of the Living Dead]

Approximately 93m; Color

VID: La Mansion de los Muertos Vivientes

[Million Dollar Video Corp.; 93m; In Spanish]

Four "very close" friends (bosom buddies, if you will) sign into the posh—but virtually deserted—hotel Aguila Playa. They split into pairs, and all four women are barely in the door when they begin chewing the carpet. (Although flapcrackers, they don't seem to have any compunction about taking on the opposite sex for a quickie if there's a man available.) All the while, in another room, some glassy-eyed schmuck is keeping his girlfriend leashed to the bed and left to starve. (What this has to do with anything is anybody's clue.)

Things start getting a little odd when—while sunbathing nude on the beach—someone tosses a meat cleaver out of a hotel window at them. (Or is it the pervert leering at them from behind the boat? Hmmm...) They get a little more time in to play with each others naughty pillows before a coven of crusty faced Templars begin abducting them for some fun and games in the basement of an old church. (Their tastes being a little odd, they prefer to top off their quaint little gangbangs with a human sacrifice. Boy, the swinging seventies were even more liberal than even I assumed them to be.) Eventually, it's Lina Romay's turn, but she's spared the bloodletting, and offers her gratitude by rushing back to the hotel and strangling her roommate. The End.

Really, the only reason this movie was made was to show the four main actresses lounging around *au naturel* for as much screen time as the threadbare script allows. (Seems they don't have any hang-ups about waltzing around the halls of the hotel butt nekkid, either.) And although I can't speak for everyone, there's nobody involved that I would want to see lounge around butt nekkid for ninety minutes. (Although quite attractive in her prime, Lina Romay has seen much better days; herein, she's bleached her hair and put on a few extra pounds, but—in spite of everything—is still the best of the lot.)

But, hey, being a Franco flick, you know it's got to be gratuitous. Unfortunate for us, gratuitous tedium accompanies the just as gratuitous nudity and gratuitous

zooms. Beware of the Triple-X rating though; although there's some fairly explicit rug munching, the rest of the sex scenes are little more than a couple of softcore wham, bam, thank you ma'ams.

For Franco completists only. (A warning not to be taken lightly, I assure you.) XXX

Devon Says...

Worse than gay porn.

☠ Necrophagus (1971)

International Films, S.A. [Spain]

DIR: Miguel Madrid (aka Michael Skaife)

PRO: Tony Recoder

SCR: Miguel Madrid (aka Michael Skaife)

DOP: Alfonso Nieva

SFX: Medina

MUS: A. Santisteban

STR: Franco Braña, John R. Clark, Titania Clement, Bill Curran, Catharine Ellison, Beatriz Ellorieta, Antonio Jiménez Escribano, Yocasta Grey, Victor Israel, Beatriz Lacy, María Paz Madrid, Rosario Royo, and Marisa Sliero

AKA: El Descuartizador de Binbrook
[The Dismemberer of Binbrook]
Graveyard of Horror
Necromaniac

Approximately 87m; Color

VID: Graveyard of Horror [Gee Video; 105(87)m]

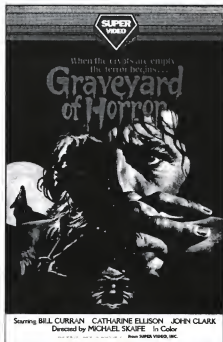
Graveyard of Horror [Super Video; 88(87)m]

Necromaniac [All American Video; 88m]

ADL: *When the crypts are empty, the terror begins...*

A man loses his wife to a failed cesarean while he's away on business. Everyone seems to be hiding something, and are especially reluctant to tell him how she kicked it. Even the authorities refuse to exhume the body upon his insistence, so he takes the initiative and digs her up and—Surprise!—the coffin's empty. So is every other coffin in the graveyard. And somehow, his absent brother works into the equation.

With a silly premise and an even sillier monster at its disposal, *Necrophagus* is so bad it's almost laughable. Almost. This muddled mess includes flash-backs within flashbacks, recycled footage, abysmal editing, painfully obvious red herrings, inappropriate "shock music," cultists in Halloween masks, an asthmatic ghoul that looks like a turnip with teeth, and a very trying script. (At one point, a doctor insists "bears don't eat meat at all." Not only that, but a police chief automatically assumes that a decapitation was the work of a "monster," without any evidence pointing to such irrational conclusions. I'd sure like to know where these



two myopic imbeciles got their degrees; I think Harvard and Oxford are out of the question.)

The film's only saving grace is that, despite a modern day setting, *Necrophagus* is mired in the sort of gothic atmosphere that makes Spanish horror fare so endearing. (One expects Paul Naschy to walk through at any given moment, either laying on the angst or drooling profusely. Preferably the latter.)

Fairly uninspired drudgery, but not without some interest to fans of Euro-trash.

Devon Says...

Oh, good God, this is bad. A man returns home to find his wife dead, which leads him into a complex web of deceit centering on yet another scientist who's used himself as a guinea pig. The widower encounters a Marty Feldman-looking gravedigger, then gets savaged

See *Scott's Video Vault*

Continued on page 37

You Can't Kill What's Already Dead!

The Rise and Appall of GICK! Magazine

or, Sixteen Years and Still in Debt

Article by *Scott Aaron Stine*

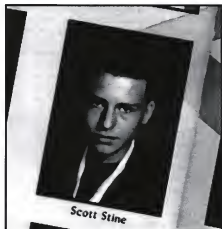
Almost five years ago, in the first nationally distributed issue of this magazine, I printed a quarter-page sidebar about the sordid history of this sordid little rag. Well, it wasn't much of a history lesson, as it was intended as little more than a quarter-page worth of filler, but this time I'm doing it right. (Forget the fact that we're celebrating our sixteenth anniversary; I've plum ran out of reviews and need at least four pages of filler this time out.)

As I stated in that aforementioned puff piece, genre-oriented fanzines usually rise from humble beginnings, with some beginnings more humbling than others. It was during my high school years that I was introduced to a splatterpunk-cum-small press publisher named Terry Wickham. Although I was not terribly impressed with his little digest-sized magazine *Carnage* ("I can do better than that," I muttered under my breath like so many neophytes before me), I was impressed by the fact he had already four issues of this mimeographed publication under his belt. (Not literally, of course; that would just be sick and wrong.)

The two of us got together one night over a batch of bad films and junk food, and I sketched an extremely sophomoric portrait of Angus Scrimm for him to publish in his next issue, with a promise of more. For whatever reason, though, we lost contact shortly thereafter. Years later, the friend that originally introduced us assured me that Mr. Wickham was not only alive and well, but was still publishing *Carnage* for whoever might care to read it. Alas, I was not to be a part of it.

The reason I did further my involvement with *Carnage* was because—the seed having been sown—I decided to publish my *own* magazine, all by my lonesome. I was an artist, after all, and something of an aspiring writer, so without extolling too much effort I could easily produce a magazine that would make his primitive publication pale in comparison.

Instead, though, I published the premiere issue of *Sickoid* ("The Magazine of Blood and Guts Flicks") in



Portrait of an Aspiring Young Publisher (1987)
(Yes, this Senior picture was taken from my High School Yearbook)

January of 1985. In retrospect, the only publication that could ever be considered nearly as dismal, nearly as incompetent, nearly as unreadable would be the much-anticipated second issue of *Sickoid*.

The first issue consisted of fourteen poorly Xeroxed pages (one-sided, of course) and stapled across the top. (Maybe I honestly thought that the latter would further separate me from less innovative publications, I dunno.) Save for the fact that it had been scaled down to nine pages, the second issue boasted the same user-friendly format. Regardless of its DIY approach, there was absolutely no excuse for such sloppy production values. Sure, I only had a portable typewriter at my disposal (top of the line for non-industrial use in the 1960s, I assure you), and, sure, I had no clue that even magic tape showed up in black and white copies, and, sure, I was only considered the school artist because most of my peers were redneck stoner jocks who couldn't grasp the logistics of drawing stick figures. Seemingly whatever journalistic experience I had prior to this was either forgotten, or sacrificed in favor of the grand gross out. (Without his permission, I even appropriated Mr. Wickham's department header of "Wretched Retrospection". Imitation may be the highest form of flattery, but this was outright theft on my part.)

Things eventually improved. *Eventually*.

Sickoid ran all of three issues, and was published under the painfully quaint imprint of "Sleazeball Productions." (The initials were printed just like EC Comics' infamous stamp. Clever, that.) With the

third issue, I finally appropriated something of a standard magazine layout, with double-sided pages and a spine. There were honest to goodness page numbers, and a contents page, and the articles herein were more than two paragraphs in length. The artwork was still amateurish (although I had seen fit to replace most of my doodlings with reproductions of film advertisements), and reviews were still threadbare, but, hey, I was too busy with the important stuff. Namely, taking credits from films, noting video labels, and rating the films by quality of production, quality of gore, and quantity of gore. (Hey, give me a break; I was an unrepentant splatterpunk who was at least eight years away from getting laid.)

Apparently, I was so pleased by the stellar improvements that I decided to honor the occasion by changing the magazine's name with the next issue, all the while retaining the original numbering. Thus was born *Reflections of a Teen-Age Gorehound* number four. Although the artwork had improved, reviews were slim, with the remainder of the issue spent on fiction by Yours Truly. (This was years before I adapted the literary *nom de plume* of "Reginald Bloom", although I tend to list this piece in his complete bibliography.)

Reflections of a Teen-Age Gorehound saw the light of day only twice. The last issue was published the year I graduated High School, and marked the first publication of mine where I vented my ire in print. Although I had not forsaken trash films and the horror genre, I was A: Fed up with people making unfounded assumptions about my person because of my interest in horror cinema, and B: Focusing most of my time on pursuits more benefitting of a burgeoning political activist. (This was before I realized that anarchism was *not* a solution to all of society's ills, and that people tend not to take individuals who have not bathed in weeks very seriously. Lucky for you that you know me as the softhearted, well-groomed misanthrope I am today.)

To commemorate the magazine's last gasp, the front and back cover boasted red ink in addition to the usual black and white (although still Xeroxed, and poorly aligned), with blood-spattered letters deftly announcing "The End" on the back. Yes, I had had my say on the subject of splatter films, and there was no turning back. It had been a glorious two years with my name in the

limelight, but the bulbs were growing dim and it was time to focus my energies and talents on more serious matters. Soon, *Sickoid aka Reflections of a Teen-Age Gorehound* would be naught but a memory.

The next year, I published *Painful Excursions* number six.

Something happened, though, in the interim. In scarcely a year's time, I decided to be a writer. Not just a "I can throw words on a page and get someone to read them if I beg loud enough" wannabe wordsmith but a "let's actually write something interesting and get them coming back for more" kinda' writer. Not only did I suddenly have something to say, but I was also saying it with a modicum of wit and grace. (Read: A modicum. Even though these early issues will never again—in whole or in part, outside of the covers—see print, I won't make the mistake of trying to convince anyone they were even remotely professional. That would be akin to saying *Blood Freak* was a groundbreaking piece of cinematic work that rivaled *A Clockwork Orange* as social commentary.)

Out of school, living at home while schlepping myself at a dead end job in a comic book store, I now had more time to devote to my publishing venture, even if the print run rarely exceeded fifty copies. Having bribed a friend into typesetting the text for me on his computer (losing a signed Harlan Ellison book in the process—a trade I have never stopped regretting), this issue took another stride forward.

Still deluded into thinking that I was an artist, I showcased as much of my pen and ink work as I could squeeze into the magazine, if only because I had failed to get it published elsewhere. And so as not to forget my more "literary" pursuits, Reginald Bloom made an appearance, with a story that has long since been permanently "archived."

More important were the films that I covered therein. Although most could still be considered "splatter" films, the focus was already shifting towards trashier fare from the 1970s. (This issue offered my first "real" filmographies, aggrandizing the works of Amando de Ossorio and John Waters.) Granted, some of my reviews still left much to be desired. As I alluded to a few issues back, I reviewed the Andy Milligan film *Carnage* (1986) in as few words as possible. Having not recognized him as the trend-setting auteur he was (okay, so I'm being a tad facetious), I cut down this particular opus by warning the reader "Oh,



my God! Lock your doors! Bolt your windows! It's... a new Andy Milligan film! AAAAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRR-
GGGGGGHHHH!!!!!!" That was the review in its entirety.
In its entirety. Oh, my rapier wit was almost stifling.

So how would I commemorate my return to the world of publishing? Easy. Take two years off.

In 1990, *Painful Excursions* once again saw the light of day, now as a magazine-sized magazine. (The imprint of Sleazeball Productions had finally worn out its welcome, so the short-lived B&D Publishing—that's Bloom and Dempsey, *not* bondage and discipline, you pervos—was implemented as my self-proclaimed publishing empire.) With number seven, my artwork had improved immensely, the ad reproductions were as crisp as I could ever hope for being third-generation Xeroxes, my layout skills were no longer migraine-inducing, and—lo and behold—the reviews and articles actually had some breadth to them. I was almost ready to hit the big time; I could *feel* it. Objectively, I could look at the final product and say without any compunctions "I've seen worse."

Two years in the making, issue eight was to be distributed nationally by such distributors as Diamond, Capital and Second Genesis. Or so I assumed.

By the time I went to work on this watershed issue (now published by Stigmata Press), I had accrued some honest to goodness experience in professional journalism working on local papers, as a layout artist and as a writer. No longer would my magazine be a mere "fanzine" that would only be read and appreciated by a select few. No longer would I be lumped in with every other vanity publication espousing crappy films. No longer would I be trying to dump my already humble print runs at swap meets, accosting any unsuspecting soul who showed the slightest bit of interest in me or horror films in general.

Or so I thought. Having approached the aforementioned distributors, I found out days before it was to go to press—quite literally—that no one wanted to have anything to do with my barely competent fanzine. Befuddled and discouraged, number eight never made it past the ashen stage. If I thought that there was half a chance, I'd suggest you hit up the distributors for their copies, but we all know where they ended up. (Let's just say that a landfill in New Jersey probably had their work cut out for them a week after I sent out these perfunctory mailings.)

But, as you all know, the story didn't end there. Apparently, the trauma was just too much to take, as it took another four years for Yours Truly to recover from the previous debacle. In 1996, I published an overdue "10th Anniversary Special" that—despite a return to the Xeroxed format and print run of fifty copies—could be considered the first true issue of GICK!

By the time this issue was published, I had almost finished the first draft of my book *The Gorehound's Guide to Splatter Films*, and had garnered some interest from publishers. Having realized that the book could benefit from my reviving *Painful Excursions*, I updated some of the unpublished articles and reviews from number eight, utilizing a format similar to what I was using for the reviews in my book. Credits were extensive, my reviews more in-depth, more polished. And—most importantly—my approach had taken a decidedly tongue-in-cheek tone. How often could one honestly review such films with a straight face? As if to mark this new beginning, the magazine carried the similarly-affectatious subtitle "The Journal for Serious Splatterpunks and Trash Fiends".

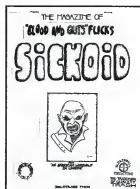
Around this time, I had renewed acquaintances with an old friend, the only person I had ever met who was nearly as freaky about the subject of horror films as I. Enter Larry Schemel. Feeding off each other's prurient interests in trash cinema, we decided to join forces and get this publication onto the newsstands and into the hands of other poor, misguided souls like us where it belonged.

And, somehow, we finally made it. Diamond Distributors—having since become the leading force in the comics industry by buying out most of their competition—picked us up. Of course, we only broke even because our printers accidentally undercharged us (which we discovered long after the fact), but the response we received made us realize we were filling a niche. (Critical acclaim may be too strong a term, but the half a dozen letters we received that were more positive than negative was overwhelming compared to what I received on earlier issues.)

And, well, the progress this magazine has made since can be found in the previous five issues of GICK! There have been innumerable hurdles—personal and professional—that have plagued each and every issue, but I've ranted about the more crushing blows in their respective editorials. Suffice it to say, the history of the magazine is almost as tepid as some of my sad ramblings; I guess I should count myself lucky that my readers have an extremely high tolerance for both pain and boredom, if their interest in these films are any indication.

I'm tempted to say "here's to sixteen more" but I have my doubts as to whether I could still stomach such abuse when I'm forty-eight. But, hey, at least we made it into the new millennium. (But so did Brittney Spears and organized religion, though, so I guess that's not much of a feat.)





Sickoid V1#1 (1985)



Sickoid V1#2 (1985)



Sickoid V1#3 (1986)

GICK! MAGAZINE

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Note: All of the issues listed here are no longer available.

☛ Sickoid V1#1 (January/February/March 1985)

Publisher: Sleazeball Productions

Editor: Scott Stine (aka Scum)

14 8/16" x 11" photocopied pages; stapled at top

No cover price (Print Run: Fifteen copies)

- Up From the Depths (Editorial)
- Movie Reviews (An American Werewolf in London, Andy Warhol's Frankenstein, Basket Case, The Brood, Dawn of the Dead, Deadly Blessing, Halloween, The Hills Have Eyes, Maniac, Night of the Living Dead, Phantasm, The Prowler, Rabid and The Texas Chainsaw Massacre)
- Things to Keep an Eye Out For (Coming Attractions)
- Wretched Retrospection (Bloodsucking Freaks, Boogeyman II, The Demon, Driller Killer, Evil Dead, Friday the 13th—The Final Chapter, Nightmare, Pieces, Squirm and Zombie)
- H.G. Lewis—Grandfather of Gore (Retrospective)

☛ Sickoid V1#2 (April/May/June 1985)

Publisher: Sleazeball Productions

Editor: Scott Stine (aka Scum)

9 8/16" x 11" photocopied pages; stapled at top

75¢ cover price (Print Run: Fifteen copies)

- Up From the Depths (Editorial)
- Movie Reviews (Creepshow, Dawn of the Mummy,

Doctor Butcher M.D., Happy Birthday to Me, The Howling, Incubus, The Last Horror Film, Martin, The Pit and Q—The Winged Serpent)

- Things to Keep an Eye Out For (Coming Attractions)
- George Romero & Tom Savini (Filmography)
- Wretched Retrospection (City of the Walking Dead, Night of the Zombies, Savage Weekend, Season of the Witch and The Town That Dreaded Sundown)
- Do You Know Your Gore? (Trivia)

☛ Sickoid V1#3 (Circa 1986)

Publisher: Sleazeball Productions

Editor: Scott Stine (aka Scum)

20 7/8" x 8 1/2" photocopied pages; not stapled

\$1.00 cover price (Print Run: Twenty copies)

- Up From the Depths (Editorial)
- Movie Reviews (Andy Warhol's Dracula, Children Shouldn't Play with Dead Things, Color Me Blood Red, Deep Red, Gates of Hell, The Ghastly Ones, I Spit on Your Grave, Invasion of the Flesh Hunters, Last House on the Left, Microwave Massacre, Mother's Day, Return of the Living Dead, Scalps, Shock Waves, Slayer and Vampire Hookers)
- Things to Keep an Eye Out For (Coming Attractions)
- Richard Corben (Retrospective)
- Tom Savini—Sultan of Splat (Filmography)

☛ Reflections of a Teen-Age Gorehound

V3#4 (October 1986)

Publisher: Sleazeball Productions

Editor: Scott Stine (aka Scum)

12 5/16" x 8 1/2" photocopied pages; not stapled

50¢ cover price (Print Run: Thirty copies)

- Up From the Depths
- Video Reviews (Bloodstalkers, The Body Shop, The



Teen-Age Gorehound V3#4 (1986)



Teen-Age Gorehound V3#5 (1987)



Painful Excursions V4#6 (1988)

Reflections of a Teen-Age Gorehound *continued...*
 Burning, Creature, Creepers, Curse of the Screaming Dead, Futurekill, Hills Have Eyes 2, House by the Cemetery, Horror Hospital, The Incredible Melting Man, Manhattan Baby, The Mutilator, Re-Animator, Scream Bloody Murder, Screamers, Silent Night, Deadly Night, Slumber Party Massacre, Trauma and When the Screaming Stops)

- Film Reviews (The Fly)
- Book Reviews (The Amazing World of Herschell Gordon Lewis and His World of Exploitation Films)
- The Busdriver (Fiction)

Reflections of a Teen-Age Gorehound V3#5 (February 1987)

Publisher: Sleazeball Productions

Editor: Scott Stine (aka Scum)

12 7" x 8 1/2" photocopied pages; not stapled

75¢ cover price (Print Run: Thirty copies)

- Up From the Depths (Editorial)
- Movie Reviews (Alien Prey, Alone in the Dark, Amityville 3-D, Buried Alive, Don't Go in the House, Eyes of a Stranger, Female Trouble, Friday the 13th Part VI—Jason Lives, Funhouse, House, House on Straw Hill, Make Them Die Slowly, Microwave Massacre, Motel Hell, Nightmare on Elm Street II, Psycho III, The Ripper, Return of the Alien's Deadly Spawn, Shriek of the Mutilated, Silent Night, Bloody Night, The Supernaturals, Superstition, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre II and Three on a Meathook)
- Things to Keep an Eye Out For (Coming Attractions)
- Book Reviews (The Psychotronic Encyclopedia of Film and Gore Shriek)
- Gorehound Awards
- Afterword (Editorial)

Painful Excursions V4#6 (August 1988)

Publisher: Sleazeball Productions

Editor: Scott Stine

38 5 1/2" x 8 1/2" photocopied pages; stapled

\$1.25 cover price (Print Run: Thirty copies)

- Up From the Depths (Editorial)
- Scum's Video Reviews (Alien Predators, Andy Warhol's Bad, Beyond the Door II, Bird with the Crystal Plumage, Blood Diner, Bloody Moon, Boarding House, Burial Ground, Cannibal Girls, Carnage, Chopping Mall, Color Me Blood Red, The Craving, Criminally Insane, Daughters of Darkness, Desperate Living, Dr. Tarr's Torture Dungeon, Don't Look in the Basement, Drive-In Massacre, Female Trouble, Filmgore, The Flesh and Blood Show, Fright Night, From Beyond, Gold Told Me To, Grave of the Vampire, I Dismember Mama, Ilsa—She Wolf of the SS, Inferno, Invasion of the Blood Farmers, Jack the Ripper, Junior, Mark of the Devil, Midnight, Monster Hunter, Monster in the Closet, Mountaintop Motel Massacre, New York Ripper, Night of the Death cult, Night of the Demon, Nightmare House, Nightstalker, Orgy of the Dead, Psycho Sisters, Rawhead Rex, Sisters, Snuff, Spider Baby, The Thirsty Dead, Torso, Torture Chamber of Baron Blood, Toxic Avenger and Vampyres—Daughters of Dracula)
- Amanda de Ossorio (Filmography)
- John Waters (Filmography)
- Nearness to Death; No Nearer God (Fiction)
- Official Crossword Puzzle Contest (Promotion)
- Execution and the Wicker Chairs (Fiction)
- Things to Keep an Eye Out For (Coming Attractions)

Painful Excursions V7#7 (Summer 1990)

Publisher: B&D Publishing

Editor: Scott Stine



Painful Excursions V7#7 (1990)



Painful Excursions V7#8 (1992)



Painful Excursions V1#9 (1996)

Painful Excursions continued...

24 8½" x 11" photocopied pages; stapled
\$2.00 cover price (Print Run: Fifty copies)

- Scum's Video Vault (Bay of Blood, The Beyond, Blood Cult, Breakfast at Manchester Morgue, Cannibal Hookers, Crazy Fat Ethel II, The Creature with the Blue Hand, Evil Dead 2—Dead by Dawn, The Gore-Gore Girls, I, Madman, Inquisition, The Killing Kind, Mantis in Lace, The Meateater, Multiple Maniacs, Pumpkinhead, Rattles Auges, Return of the Evil Dead, Stage Fright, The Stepfather, Street Trash, The Unnameable and The Undertaker and His Pals)
- Deep Retrospective—The Films of Dario Argento
- Caught in my Eye (Fiction)
- Animal Slaughter in the Horror Film (Exposé)
- Flushed (Fiction)
- Angst of a Porcelain God (Fiction)
- Things to Keep an Eye Out For (Coming Attractions)

Painful Excursions V7#8 (Winter 1992)

Publisher: Stigmata Press

Editor: Scott Stine

24 8½" x 11" photocopied pages; stapled a corner
\$2.00 cover price (Print Run: Ten copies)

Note: This issue was only made available to magazine distributors as an unfinished, uncirculated ascan.

- Up From the Depths (Editorial)
- The Video Vault (The Abomination, Asylum of Satan, Bloodlust, The Demon Lover, The Devils, Die Screaming Marianne, The Eerie Midnight Horror Show, Eyeball, Flesh Feast, Fury of the Wolfman, Ilsa—Tigress of Siberia, Leatherface—The Texas Chainsaw Massacre III, Mansion of the Doomed, Ministry—In Case You Didn't Feel Like Showing Up... Live, Nailgun Massacre, Night of the Sorcerers, Night Warning, Not of This Earth, A

Thousand Pleasures, Violent Bloodbath and The Worm Eaters)

- Cinematic Geeking—Animal Cruelty in the Horror Film (Exposé)
- The Indoctination of Cassie (Fiction)
- The Mortician (Fiction)
- Deliverance of the Flesh Engineers (Fiction)
- Pariah (Comic Strip)
- Mail-Order Mayhem—Picking the Pros and Avoiding the Cons (Exposé)

Painful Excursions V1#9 (Winter/Spring 1996)

Publisher: Stigmata Press

Editor: Scott Stine

24 8½" x 11" photocopied pages; stapled
\$2.00 cover price (Print Run: Fifty copies)

- Up From the Depths (Editorial)
- The Video Vault (El Ataque de los Muertos Sin Ojos, Blood Freak, La Casa della Paura, Exorcismo Negro, Hexen Geschendet und Zu Tode Gequalt, The Icebox Murders, The Last House on Dead End Street, Nigh Ripper!, Panico en el Bosque, Satan's Black Wedding, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre—A Family Portrait and The Toy Box)
- Mail-Order Madness—Picking the Pros and Avoiding the Cons (Exposé)
- Cinematic Geeking—Animal Cruelty in the Splatter Film (Exposé)

Okay... now all you bums out there better stop harassing me as to what's in these early issues, and to their availability. And I *ain't* gonna Xerox them for you. I can't afford a tarnished rep, now can I? The Editor



You've GOT to Be Kidding

More Horror Stories from the World of eBay

Article by *Scott Aaron Stine*

It's 10:56 pm, and I'm avoiding the inevitable. As could be expected, I'm stationed before a ghastly contraption that makes Mary Shelley Wolstencraft's patchwork creation seem positively droll in retrospect. Whereas her creation inspired fear into a certain young boy who wet his bed like clockwork and slept with a teddy bear with its plastic nose chewed off, it is now this piece-meal monstrosity that strikes fear into a man who naively thought that such bogeymen were a by-product of youth. Even now I can envision a prosthetic-laden Karloff huddled in a corner, swollen hands trying feebly to shield his eyes from the screen's glare, the Compaq Presario 2266 looming ominously over him as it hums from Dr. Frankenstein's dissection table nearby. If this poor soul knew I—a mere human—had to face this selfsame mockery of progress every day, from sun up until sun down, he would surely feel pity on me and bludgeon me to death with my own Thesaurus.

It's now 11:22 pm, but neither my Thesaurus nor any Lovecraft compendium could proffer the adjectives necessary to describe indescribable horrors I have yet to touch upon. One would think that the hatred I feel for this bugfucked piece of machinery would be unequalled, but fate has the last laugh. You see, the nightmare that is my word processor offers only a taste of the abyss. Only a taste. I have found one of the fabled gates of Hell exploited by Fulci and his ilk; unbeknownst to them, this particular entrance has been made readily available to any schmuck with a modem. Those who dare let its name pass their lips have went to the grave uttering the same as if they were brandishing an epithet.

eBay awaits.

Having now been an active participant on eBay for a full year, I can honestly say—with very, very few reservations—that trimming my pubic hair with a gas-powered weed whacker would be a more satisfying and personally enriching experience. No question about it.

I have spent the last two hours trying to avoid those three mono-syllabic words that have caused my testicles to permanently withdraw into the hollow of my gut. The "You've Got Mail!" that awaits me in cyberspace has been casually put on hold by a newly acquired copy of *How to Make a Monster*. Even as nostalgia swept me aside for most of the film's eighty-odd minute running time, I still wanted to scream out at the screen

"You want to know how to make a monster? I'll tell you how to make a frikkir' monster." My answer, had it queried for a response? "Let this hypothetical individual buy and sell on eBay!"

Every pop psychologist has his own rationale as to what creates mass murderers: Pornography, rock music, Dungeons & Dragons, comic books, horror movies, yadda yadda yadda. Do you want to know what makes people turn sour and walk down a normally quiet suburban street in his underwear doing half-assed Dennis Hopper impersonations while taking potshots at anything that moves with a .45 automatic he's named after some guy on a game show he's never met? Simple. People. Just people. Maybe not people like you and me, but people all the same. And you want to know where this particular breed of "people" likes to hang out? Well, if they're not gawking at the aforementioned marksman in his Fruit of the Looms from the supposed security of their front lawns, or videotaping the incident in order to sell it to anyone willing to pay the price of admission, you can find them on eBay.

A few weeks back, a well-meaning reader dropped me a line to compliment me on a copy of this magazine that he had just ordered, namely issue three. In so many words, he said that—although he thoroughly enjoyed that issue's article "eBay—Troubled Waters in a Not-So-Safe Harbor"—he thought I was a bit too harsh on the premiere online auction site. Sure, you get a few people trying to take advantage of the rubes, but it's worth a couple of unsatisfactory transactions for all of the good deals one can find therein. By the time I received this letter, six months had passed since that previous issue went to press, and I came unbearably close to venting my spleen on this poor soul who didn't realize that his words had an effect similar to bamboo shoots prodding the soft spots beneath one's fingernails.

I have found a couple of good deals going through eBay, of this I can't deny. In fact, I can honestly say that I've had a few transactions that were as good as manna from Heaven; not only did I find something for which I had been searching countless years, I was able to procure it at a price that seemed unreal.

Twelve months later, though, I would gladly send these treasures back to their previous owners (at my own expense) if it meant never having to deal with all of the incompetent dilettantes and half-witted hucksters that make up the remainder of my "winning" bids. Yes, eBay has become a haven for deception and incompetence unprecedented in our history (with the possible exception of organized religion). Professionalism and common sense are officially dead. Long live eBay.

It's 12:03 am. My ulcer croons in anticipation of the responses I should have waiting for me in my virtual

mailbox by now. One will be from a man who won a Little Mermaid laserdisc from me a month ago on eBay. Another is possibly a response from an allegedly professional dealer who sold me four Eerie Publications in "Excellent" condition. A third could very well be from a man whom I verbally abused some time back.

Are you in one of those rubbernecking sorta' moods? Are you itchin' for details, knowing full well that I will be the recipient of so much foul play? Do you want to hear me bash at these keys with one hand while plucking the hair out of the nape of my neck with the other? Well, you've paid your admission, so here's the long and short of it.



Horror Story Number One. I send out a notification to the highest bidder of a still-sealed Little Mermaid Collection laserdisc that I had posted on eBay. I am a little disappointed that it only sells for \$6.30 (plus \$3.20 for priority shipping), but am much more peeved that I have to contact eBay twenty days later having not received payment, filing a Non-Paying Bidder Alert so I can get a credit on some of the fees should the bidder not follow through. They contact him, and the next day I get a letter from the lucky winner asking me to resend him a copy of the notification letter. He probably forgot about the auction, having accidentally deleted my e-mail. No problem. A week after I resend all of the necessary information, he drops me a line saying he bid on this laserdisc by mistake, as he already owned a copy. I ignore this subtle plea and wade through the rest of the letter (mostly questions about laserdiscs that I can't answer, since I know nothing about them) until I get to the end where he asks if he could send me cash. I respond with a to-the-point "Cash is fine." And leave it at that.

Another week passes, and I get a couple of more letters with questions about laserdiscs and Disneyana, but still no payment. I'm polite, and write only as much as I have to in the hope that he realizes that I have no information to offer.

Days pass. Still no cash. Well past the "waiting period" for deadbeat bidders, I file for non-payment so that I can at least get back some of the monies that eBay charged to my credit card for their services. Insofar, I'm out \$.25 for the activation fee, the exorbitant interest from my credit card for the total fees, probably an hour for posting and correspondence, and a couple of layers of stomach lining. Of course, it's been over a month now, so if I want to repost this item for sale, I'll have to redo the entire post (instead of simply relisting the item) and pay another activation fee. Pissed, but I'll live.

A few days later, never expecting to hear from Mr. Laserdisc Junkie again, I get a letter in the mail.

From Switzerland. Containing an illegible address and seven dollars in cash.

Anyone who has read one of my postings can't help but notice that I go out of my way to point out that, no, I do not, under any circumstances (matters of life and death notwithstanding), ship outside of the United States. Of course, this makes the fact that he didn't send me any money to actually ship the item quite moot, as priority shipping for this item in itself exceeds \$9.00, had I even chosen to make an exception and include Northern Europe as part of the United States just this one time. Needless to say, he got one of my infamous pissy e-mails reeking of bile and other bodily substances.



Horror Story Number Two. A little more than a month ago, after I found out that I wouldn't have to move after all, I decided to splurge and buy a few magazines off of eBay, conveniently forgetting that—despite all efforts to cover my ass before bidding—my previous purchases had gotten progressively worse. Those "once in a lifetime deals" had become a thing of the past in less than a year, but I wasn't going to let that stop me from trying to fill some holes in my box of Eerie Publications.

While searching such keywords as "Terror," "Tomb," "Voodoo," "Witches," "Tales" and, well, you get the picture, I stumbled across a batch of four issues I didn't have, mistakenly stuffed in an eBay niche where they would be conveniently over-looked by anyone but the most resourceful collectors. Not only did I need all four, the seller also listed them as being in "Excellent" condition. The fact they weren't graded by Overstreet gave me cause to alarm, so—being a more wary, more learned eBay buyer than I once was—I e-mailed them as to the exact condition of each issue, with a description of any and all defects they might display. They wrote back and assured me that they were all Near Mint—Crisp. And like the fool who had finally made the distinction between his ass and a molehill, I placed the initial bid of \$9.99, even taking into account the reasonable priority shipping price of \$4.00. (Sure, it would only cost them \$3.20 to ship, but an extra \$.80 for reinforced cardboard to keep the post office from mangling it *en route* more than made up the difference.) Unfortunately, I was the only bidder.

Okay, here's my e-mail to these folks, having received the magazines three weeks later. (As always, names are changed to protect the guilty.)

Subj: Re: 4 XLNT Weird Tales, Vampire Tales
Date: 8/25/00
From: Trashfiend@aol.com
To: sleazytoys

Today I received the four Eerie Publications I won from you on eBay, and was quite appalled to discover the way in which they were shipped. I was more than disturbed to find the damage they had accrued in shipping, obviously due to the way they were packaged. Even taking this into consideration, there was absolutely no way these were in the "Near Mint—Crisp" condition you claimed they were just prior to shipping. Grading aside, I assumed from our correspondence that you were an experienced dealer, and would have the forethought to sandwich paper collectibles of any type between two sheets of cardboard, or to secure it in a cardboard mailer in order to minimize any damage that may result during shipping. Instead, I find the magazines simply tossed in an unpadded envelope without anything to secure its integrity save for a plastic bag. As a result, the package had been folded in half and stuffed into my post office box, as well as suffering other damage it wouldn't have had it been packaged properly. (There wasn't even a "Do Not Bend" stamped or written on the envelope, not that this would have helped much.) There was absolutely no excuse for this as I paid \$4.00 for shipping—more than enough to pay even secure priority shipping complete with cardboard mailer—whereas you sent it fourth class of all things for a whopping \$1.13, the absolute worst way to ship collectibles. I have purchased innumerable magazines and comics—as well as other paper collectibles—through eBay, and—although I have seen some poor packaging in my time—I've never received anything that showed such a complete disregard for the items' condition—something that is very important to collectors like myself. But again—poor packaging aside—these pieces had probably not been in "Near Mint—Crisp" condition since they came out almost twenty years ago. I have been a seriously collector for twenty years now, and there is no way in hell that—even disregarding any damage that they received in transit—these could have been in anything better than Very Good when shipped. (Since I now have my doubts as to your experience with or knowledge of collectibles, Very Good is worth—at best—a fifth of Near Mint, making these pieces worth much, much less than what I paid for them.) Had I any clue that this was the condition in which I would receive it, I wouldn't have paid as much as I did for these pieces; had I known the complete disregard you show towards your transactions, and your knowledge of the business, I wouldn't have bid at all.

If you're going to continue dealing with collectibles, or sell on eBay, I strongly suggest you improve your shipping techniques and learn how to grade properly. Some people may not notice or care about such ignorance, but many others like myself will be very unhappy and frustrated with having wasted their time and money on such dealings.

Thank you for being receptive.

Scott Stine

Yes, the king of subtlety does it again with his exemplary people skills and knack for handling otherwise awkward situations. (Oh, does the "Thank you for being receptive" come of as a little facetious? Guess I'll have to lighten the tone on that one.)

But wait, there's more. Three days later, I sent them the following note:

Subj: Re: 4 XLNT Weird Tales, Vampire Tales
Date: 8/28/00
From: Trashfiend@aol.com
To: sleazytoys

Since I have not heard a response from you concerning my extreme dissatisfaction with the above transaction, I can only assume you have no intention of trying to make good on what was flagrant deception on your part. Negative feedback will be posted on your behalf tomorrow morning if I do not hear from you before then with good reason as to why I shouldn't. Good day.

Scott Stine

Which finally elicited a response of:

Subj: Re: 4 XLNT Weird Tales, Vampire Tales
Date: 8/28/00
From: sleazytoys
To: Trashfiend@aol.com

well the reason I did not respond you were so unhappy that I did not feel if I could not possible have made you happy now and in the future you could try to say you were unhappy in a different tone. I want to be like you because you actually made me not want to bother with you and say so leave bad feed back I do not care. If you would like to be kind and ask to resolve this matter in a different tone I might be easier to reply if not that's on you because I really do not care

Boy, was I put in my place. (Love that thar grammar, don't you? And people criticize me about my run-on sentences.) Although it sounded to me like someone was trying to weasel their way out of a failed scam, I decided to try a more tactful approach:

Subj: Re: 4 XLNT Weird Tales, Vampire Tales
Date: 8/28/00
From: Trashfiend@aol.com
To: sleazytoys

Had I though it was a simple misunderstanding, I wouldn't have been so brusque, but I couldn't help but to feel that I had been lied to, and that the poor shipping was a reflection of your attitude towards your product and your customers. Furthermore, your failure to respond did nothing to quell these feelings... just the opposite. What kind of response did you expect, pray

tell? I do not enjoy getting in people's faces, but there was no way I could cover up my dissatisfaction with almost every aspect of this transaction. I felt like I was lied to and cheated, and acted accordingly. Had I thought it was purely out of ignorance, you can be assured that my "tone" would have been different, but this did not seem like the case to me, and you have yet to convince me that it was otherwise. Your "why bother, I don't care" attitude doesn't tell me anything to the contrary; I know if someone sent me a similar letter, I wouldn't hesitate to try and set the record straight, especially if my ethics were called into question or my reputation was at stake. I give kindness to those that deserve it, so it's up to you to convince me that you deserve the benefit of the doubt first. I know where I stand, but with you I have no clue save for seemingly well-founded assumptions.

Scott

To which they replied "send them back". No defense, no apology, nothing beyond those three words. Incompetence or impudence, you be the judge. Knowing full well I would probably never get a refund even if I *did* return them, I instead decided to throw some negative feedback their way. When I went to do this, though, their account was temporarily suspended. Funny thing, that I waited it out, and was able to post some kind words when they were again up and running (Always one to air my dirty laundry, I left the succinct message of "Deplorable service. Can't grade. Poor shipping. Overcharged S&H. Ignored e-mails.")

Unlike the others, this one has a shock ending. When I checked out their feedback rating, I found to my own horror that, not only did they have a feedback rating of 156, I was also the first and insofar only person to leave them negative feedback of any genus or species. Every last person simply raved about their shipping, their grading, their service as a whole. If ever there was a defining moment that made me doubt the rumor that mankind is a cognizant being, it was the here and now.



Horror Story Number Three. This is the one that sent me over the deep end, the one whereupon I found myself standing before an open underwear drawer muttering "I'm bringing it down..." and hoping the extension cord to my electric staple gun would reach past the front porch. (Granted, this incident predates the others, but a day doesn't go by that I expect to find an e-mail bomb from a certain Charlie Spradling fan who blames me for ruining three years of psychotherapy. His, not mine.)

Originally, the following excerpt was going to be the whole of this follow-up to my eBay article, but

without this extended introduction, as it were, it simply came across as the petulant whining of a mad dog. Now, hopefully, you'll see it as the petulant whining of a mad dog that has every right to be pissed off at the half-dead possum that gave him rabies in the first place. Violins, please...



Call me grumpy. Call me petty. Call me outright hostile. If having to deal with unethical and/or incompetent sellers on eBay wasn't bad enough, I have found to my dismay that many buyers are born with a similar faculty for plucking at one's nerves like the pizzicato-driven soundtracks of so many half-baked horror films. And I adamantly *refuse* to let these nematodes get the last say, or draw the last drop of blood, even if it makes me look grumpy. Or petty. Or outright hostile. (If I pick my words right, they'll carry the pungent smell of garlic with which to fend off such bloodsuckers, believe you me.)

Although I cannot afford to devote the space *this* issue to the nightmare that is eBay (refer to the third issue for details on my less than pleasant dealings with sellers), I have singled out a recent episode for your bemusement. (Hey, my bleeding ulcer certainly dug this outing. Surely, if there's no microcephalic entrepreneurs around with which to sate its beastly thirst, an obsessive, presumptuous fan will do in a pinch.)



Subj: Fangoria Spectacular #10
Date: 5/20/00
From: Trashfiend@aol.com
To: name withheld@hotmail.com

Hey There!

It looks like you were the highest bidder on the Fangoria Spectacular #10 that was up for auction at E-Bay. Please send a money order made out to "Scott Stine" in the amount of \$9.20 (\$6.00 plus \$3.20 for priority shipping) to:

Scott Stine
 PO Box 5273
 Everett, WA 98206-5273

(Dear Readers: I'll spare you the rest of my eBay notification spiel as its only insight is to shipping costs and the like.)



Subj: Re: Fangoria Spectacular #8
Date: 5/21/00
From: name withheld@hotmail.com
To: Trashfiend@aol.com

Hi. I was wondering if you would be able to describe for me the contents in this issue that relate to Charlie Spradling, and whether you would be able to get another copy. I was outbid near the end. Thanks.



Subj: Fangoria Spectacular #8
Date: 5/21/00
From: Trashfiend@aol.com
To: name withheld@hotmail.com

Sorry, but I only have the one issue. I'll try to check up on the one issue when I get a chance to see what it has on Spradling, but I'm rushing a deadline right now so it may be a couple of days. Take care.



Subj: Re: Fangoria Spectacular #10
Date: 5/22/00
From: name withheld@hotmail.com
To: Trashfiend@aol.com

Hi Scott. Before I send the money order, I should let you know that I live in Canada, so postage may be a dollar or three more. Let me know what the difference is (if any). Thanks.



Subj: Fangoria Spectacular #10
Date: 5/22/00
From: Trashfiend@aol.com
To: name withheld@hotmail.com

Unfortunately, priority shipping for anything up to two pounds to Canada is a flat \$9.00 fee, and I'm not set up to do standard (ground) shipping. Sorry for the inconvenience, but this is why I specifically state that I do not ship outside of the US in my auction posts. Take care.



Subj: Re: Fangoria Spectacular #10
Date: 5/24/00
From: name withheld@hotmail.com
To: Trashfiend@aol.com

Hi Scott. I know that you stated that, but I have bid on many auctions, and many of those times it has been stated only US bidders, but every single time I have emailed the sellers about bidding, they have never said no. They only wanted to avoid anything overseas (which is understandable). I have lost out on auctions because sellers didn't mail me back right away, and I was too late to bid, which is why I have stopped asking permission. It wouldn't make sense to exclude Canadians, since our countries work the same, and postage is not much more. I don't understand why postage isn't cheaper, since I have received magazines from England and Belgium for less, but if that is what you say it is, then fine. Also, I

was wondering if you would be able to colour copy the pictures/text related to Charlie Spradling from the Fangoria Horror Spectacular #8 that was recently auctioned. Whatever the cost, let me know. Thanks.



Subj: Fangoria Spectacular #10
Date: 5/24/00
From: Trashfiend@aol.com
To: name withheld@hotmail.com

Postage outside of the US is cheaper if you ship standard rate, but I only do priority as that is all I'm set up to do. International priority mail is upwards of \$9.00, depending on where one ships. I used to ship standard and priority outside of the United States, but lost a great deal of money because I would always underestimate shipping costs, as I didn't want to overcharge buyers like some dealers on eBay do. (Priority is easy as everything I sell is under two pounds, which costs the standard priority rate of \$3.20 within the US. Furthermore, the post office supplies all of the mailers and boxes I need free of charge for priority shipping, so I don't have to buy them myself and tack this on as an additional fee.) This is why I not only filled out the field that stated "ship to United States only", but also wrote "Due to myriad problems, I will no longer ship outside of the United States. I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause" within the ordering instructions themselves, so there would be no confusion. If I could avoid excluding anyone, I would, but my situation just doesn't make it feasible.

Also, I can't make any promises about copying the article. I am in the midst of the most gut-wrenching deadline I have ever faced, and I'll be crunching sixteen-hour days here indefinitely until the project is done. (As it is, I won't be able to post much on eBay for the next few weeks, which is tough because that is how I'm currently making my livelihood until the book is done and I can go back to a nine to five job for a while.) Worse, I live out in the middle of nowhere, with no car, and the nearest copy shop is an hour's busride away.

Again, I'm sorry for the inconvenience, but it might be best to double-check with sellers in the future if there's any question as to their selling preferences. Take care.



Subj: Re: Fangoria Spectacular #10
Date: 5/25/00
From: name withheld@hotmail.com
To: Trashfiend@aol.com

Thanks for explaining that to me, Scott. I will mail out the money order for \$15.00 tomorrow. I understand you are really busy, but it would mean a lot to me if you could photocopy that Charlie Spradling stuff. It is extremely

hard to find things on her. I wish I was around for the end of that auction. Here's my number in case you want to reach me.



Subj: Re: Fangoria Spectacular #10
Date: 6/8/00
From: name withheld@hotmail.com
To: Trashfiend@aol.com

Hi Scott. I received the magazine today. Thanks. However, I was disappointed that you weren't able to find the time to photocopy, or at least describe to me the material related to Charlie Spradling in the Horror Spectacular #8, as I requested soon after the auction for that magazine concluded. If you would be able to provide me with the email address of the bidder you sent it to, I would appreciate it.



Subj: Fangoria Spectacular #10
Date: 6/9/00
From: Trashfiend@aol.com
To: name withheld@hotmail.com

This will be my last say on the subject, as I have spent enough time dealing with your incessant pestering. If you wish to post bad feedback on my behalf for being "rude", so be it. This will only reflect badly on you as I have fulfilled my obligations to their utmost.

You, sir, need to get a life. I wouldn't care one iota that your entire existence revolves around a magazine article, except that now you wish to waste my time with this sad little grail. I do not take kindly to such psychic vampirism; the fact that I am forced to write this letter only illustrates how you waste time that I don't have to offer. This letter, though, will hopefully be the stake that puts an end to such intrusions.

I am sorry you were disappointed. Get over it. Life goes on. You will undoubtedly find another copy of this magazine on eBay in the near future for a paltry couple of bucks; there's upwards of a hundred thousand copies in circulation, so the probability is pretty high that you'll stumble upon it before you're too old to appreciate it.

You seem to think that just because your life revolves around an issue of Fangoria, that everyone else's does as well. How utterly presumptuous. While you spend your off hours surfing the Internet, I am working sixteen hour days, publishing a magazine, trying desperately to meet the demands of a book deadline, trying futilely to make ends meet on eBay, and attempting to establish a writing career without the time to even put a pen to paper. Furthermore, my life is in chaos because my landlord has passed away, and the people who inherited his estate are selling my home of three years, thus forcing me to dump half of my collection in order to

accommodate the inevitable move. But, at least I'm not alone in all of this, as I have a bleeding ulcer to keep me company in the meantime.

But then, some inconsiderate ephemeromorph comes along and—after purchasing a magazine from me for six dollars—expects me to take time out from my apparently lazy schedule to copy an article for him because he thought it smart to wait until the last minute to bid. (Apparently, the notion of simply putting down his high bid from the start never entered his mind.) I am polite throughout, stating that I will try if time allows, but—because of the circumstances—I cannot make any promises. Apparently, this individual will not take "no" for an answer, all the while feigning sympathy.

Call me melodramatic, but one quickly becomes a seasoned thespian when they have an obsessive fan harassing them relentlessly about a magazine article, all the while trying to instill second-rate guilt trips on their person. And, no, I am not about to give you the e-mail address of the person who now owns this sacred Ark of the Covenant because I do not wish them to be subjected to the selfsame pestering.

Again, do what you feel you must, whether it be post me bad feedback or wallow in the mire of your own crushed hopes. I am tired, and simply don't care at this point in time. If you have any decency about you, you will simply let the matter drop and come to the inspired conclusion that "Hey... maybe he's just too busy to copy that magazine article for me. No matter, it's not the end of the world." But, alas, I am probably asking for far too much. (Much like expecting people to actually read my auctions before bidding. Imagine that.)

Scott Stine

Within a few days of sending this letter, I received one in return. Although tempted to see how he responded to my violent—but not wholly unprovoked—incursion, I discarded the e-mail before reading it. Whether it was an apology or a condemnation, I do not know and obviously do not care. If I had read it, I would have been tempted to respond, regardless of its contents, thus wasting even more of my time.

My patience for inconsiderate, discourteous people has long since been tapped, and I will simply show them the same respect they have shown myself as well as others: None whatsoever. Call me grumpy. Call me petty. Call me outright hostile. But the thirty-or-so minutes I assuredly would have spent writing to this ingrate was instead diverted into writing copy for this magazine, something much more constructive and much more pleasing than dealing with such louts.



It's 1:17. I have to sign on to check my mail, but I can't put it off any longer without staving off a good night's sleep I so desperately need. My modem sings a dissonant tune, it's crescendo a "Welcome. You've Got Mail." Having heard these words, my ulcer rises from its slumber, eager for a feeding frenzy in which my stomach lining is the main course. In a desperate act of self-preservation, I turn off my computer and go to bed, much to the chagrin of Mr. Bleeding Ulcer.

9:05 am. Having decided that there couldn't possibly be a more pleasurable way to begin one's day, I log on and check my mail.

Spam. (Porn, of course.) Spam. ("Stock Tip of the day") More spam. (More porn, this time oh-so-cleverly disguised as an AOL "Insta-Kiss" from a supposed secret admirer. I'm surprised I fell for this the first time.) Something from the Laserdisc Junkie. Even more spam. ("Lose Ten Pounds in Two Weeks"? Screw their shakes, I say; have an ulcer and a smile, and you'll be shedding weight as you shed a half pint of blood with every bowel movement.)

I immediately forward all of the spam to AOL in the dire hope they'll actually get off their ass and do something about these cretins. Then, it's the letter from my disc-spinning acquaintance from the Swiss Alps.

Instead of a venom-tipped rebuttal, I receive nothing but a desperate response that states "You weren't supposed to send the disc!!!" Obviously, this is news to me. In all of his letters, there is not one implication, not one insinuation that he was going to pay me for my time and money spent and let me keep the disc on which he had mistakenly bid. Even upon rereading our correspondence, I find nothing to indicate that this was his intention. I so desperately want to scream out "Kreskin be damned... nothing short of the mythical almighty himself would have any clue as to what the hell you were doing!" but—alas—I doubt he would hear me.

I bite my tongue, and jot down a quick letter explaining this in as nice of terms as I could possibly muster, telling him that in the future he should strive for a little more clarity or risk making enemies that he doth not deserve. All the while, Mister Bleeding Ulcer is having a field day brunching on my breadbasket.

What is hopefully the last letter in a failed international exchange is sent, and I find myself still short a couple of e-mail bombs. (As if I would ever know I had a computer virus, with all of the tricks my Compaq still manages to pull out of its virtual sleeve.)

I decide to check up on sleazytoys' feedback, fully expecting a response to my public warning, but nothing. Something akin to disappointment overcomes

me (or maybe its one of those head rushes one experiences from a low blood count, I can't say for certain), and I log off, ready to punch the clock and finish this article.

9:56 am. I wonder if mankind is really as stupid and opportunistic and painfully inconsiderate as I've made it out to be. As if on cue, I hear my neighbors pull up, the bass on their car stereo rattling my bedroom window something fierce. Someone steps out, and proceeds to have a conversation with one of the other squatters—oops... I mean *boarders*—over the blare of the new digitally-enhanced speakers for which L&L picked up the tab. Of course, we have told these people numerous times that Michael works graveyard and sleeps days, but this matters little to them. What may have once been music but is now nothing more than a methodic tremor gets louder, swallowing their words. Their shouting increases to compensate for the disturbance.

My faith in mankind undeterred, I look over at my underwear drawer, wondering which pair would compliment the hazy overcast outside.





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Scott's Video Vault

Continued from page 23

Necrophagus continued...

by the vicious monster. For the creature's attacks, the camera zooms in and out repeatedly on people who are doing their best to look frightened. The result of one of these nasty attacks is a scratch on a boy's leg, which is then referred to as "mauled." (I guess medical descriptions are more liberal in Europe.)

This is another of those films where the viewer wonders "what was possessing the minds of the film-makers?" Surely at some point someone on the set could have seen what was going on and said, "Oy, zoomin' in and out doesn't make for a scary monster assault!" Where was the person clever enough to say, "This script is bloody ridiculous"? Why didn't they have *anyone* around to proclaim, "This has all been done before; let's stop and make us a werewolf versus the Loch Ness Monster movie!"

Did I mention that there's a cult of idiots who look like a cross between the Templar Knights and Slipknot? And that the monster could be mistaken for the Devil Flower Guy from *Hardcore*? And when it was all over, I was very, very happy.

La Orgia de los Muertos

[The Orgy of the Dead] (1972)

Petrufka Films [Spain] and Prodimex Film [Italy]

DIR: José Luis Merino

PRO: Ramón Plana

SCR: Enrico Colombo and José Luis Merino

DOP: Modesto Rizzolo

EXP: Michael O'Hara

SFX: Julian Ruiz and Bianca Verdrosi

MUS: Francesco de Masi

STR: Jacinto Molina Alvarez, Pasquale Basile, Janis Brown, Jose Cardenas, Maria Pia Conte, Aurora de Alba, Charles Fay, Giusy Garr, Catherine Gilbert, Carla Mancini, Vickie Nesbitt, Alessandro Perrella, Charles Quiney, Isarco Ravaioli, Stelvio Rossi, Harold Stanley, Shirley Stanley, Leonora Vargas, Gerard Tichy Wondzinski, Marcella Wright, and Dianik Zurakowska

AKA: Die Bestia aus dem Totenreich

[The Beast from the Kingdom of the Dead]

Beyond the Living Dead

Bracula—Terror of the Living Dead

The Hanging Woman

House of Terror

Die Nackte Götter der Zombies

[The Night Goddess of the Zombies]

L' Orgia dei Morti [The Orgy of the Dead]

Les Orgias Macabres [The Macabre Orgies]

Orgy of the Demons

Return of the Zombies—Zombie 3

Der Totenchor der Knochenmänner

[The Dead Chorus of Death]

Zombie 3—Return of the Zombies

Approximately 91m; Color

VID: Beyond the Living Dead [Unicorn Video; 91m]

The Hanging Woman

[Cinema Centre Films & Video; 90(91)m]

The Hanging Woman

[Showcase Productions; 91m]

The Hanging Woman [Fabulous Flicks; 91m]

The Hanging Woman

[United American Video Corp.; 90(91)m]

House of Terror [Wizard Video; 91m]

Return of the Zombies—Zombie 3

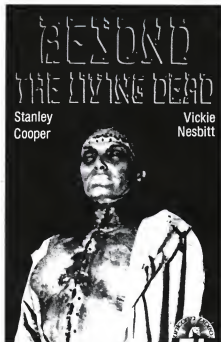
[Eddie Entertainment; 91m]

ADL: FOR THE SQUEAMISH KEEP REPEATING IT
CAN'T BE TRUE! CAN'T BE TRUE! CAN'T BE TRUE!
CAN'T BE TRUE! CAN'T BE TRUE! CAN'T BE TRUE!
(Okay... we get the point! The Editor.)

The daughter of a man laid to rest breaks into his crypt to steal some documents from his person, and is accosted by an unseen assailant with bronchitis. The dead man's nephew comes to town and stumbles across his cousin's corpse hanging from a tree in front of the graveyard. Although the police rule out suicide, the killer's identity remains a mystery, but everyone *knows* it has something to do with a series of experiments the old man was financing... experiments concerning the re-animation of dead tissue.

This is one of the more engaging Spanish goth-fests, and—as could be expected—was made with the participation of cult icon Paul Naschy (*né* Jacinto Molina Alvarez). Surprisingly, though, his role is relatively small as he plays Igor, a necrophilic gravedigger. Even more surprising is the lack of a hunchback. (Someone must've forgot to save the pillow from *El Jorobado de la Morgue*, made the same year. Thankfully, they also forgot to salvage his frightwig from that film as well.)

The production values are typical of the time period, and the gore is occasionally nasty. (There is a particularly well-executed decap, and one scene that quite possibly utilizes real autopsy footage. If not, an unfortunate pig carcass was probably used as a stand-in.) Throw in a handful of blind zombies (no, not the Templars, dagnabbit), some effective corpses, and a cheesy "hallucinatory" sex sequence that has the cinematographer spinning his camera wildly over the bed of the participants, and we have a winner.



La Orgia de los Muertos continued...

Highly recommended for aficionados of splatter Español.

Devon Says...

John Woo has done some really great films: The Killer, Hard Boiled, Bullet in the Head, etc. One of his groundbreaking films is A Better Tomorrow, which has some excellent actions sequences, even though it is mostly a gangster drama. Unfortunately for Americans (or those unaware of the Tai Seng Video label, anyway), A Better Tomorrow is only available in a dubbed version in which the bad vocal acting completely removes any power from the movie's events.

Another film suffering from the curse of bad British dubbing is The Hanging Woman. The film wanders around for awhile as we watch some guy who looks—and now sounds—a bit like Graham Chapman try to discover why people are dying at a place he's just inherited. About halfway through, the talking segues into some actual stuff happening. From there, the

dubbing was no longer a distraction for me, and the movie became a fun mad scientist tale. Interestingly, the zombies in this movie have something in common with some other dead yet living Spanish people, the Knights Templar, as both are blind. Not a bad film, although I'd like to see a subtitled copy, because the original language version is no doubt far better.

Passi di Danza Su una Lama di Rasoio [Dance Steps on a Razor's Edge] (1972)

S.E.F.I. Cinematografica [Italy]

and Producciones Balcazar S.A. [Spain]

DIR: Maurizio Pradeaux

SCR: Alfonso Balcazar, Arpad de Riso, George Martin, and Maurizio Pradeaux

DOP: Jaime deu Casas

EXP: Francisco Balcazar

MUS: Roberto Pregadio

STR: Simon Andreu, Orlando Baralla, Salvatore Borgese, Anuska Borova, Carlo Carli, Robert Hoffman, Anna Liberati, Rodolfo Lolli, George Martin, Nerina Montagnani, Serafino Profumo, Giovanni Pulone, Susan Scott, Helga Lina Stern, Cristina Tamborra, and Rosita Toros

AKA: Death Carries a Cane
Maniac at Large
Pasos de Danza Sobre el Filo de una Navaja
[Dance Steps on a Razor's Edge]
Tormentor

Approximately 91m; Color

VID: Tormentor [Wizard Video; 90(91)m]

ADL: SCREAMING CAN'T SAVE YOU FROM HIS STEELY BLADE.

Passi di Danza Su una Lama di Rasoio is a chauvinistic giallo thriller that could quite possibly be more convoluted than most of its peers. Besides the run-of-the-mill whodunit meanderings mired in red herrings and unconvincing coincidences, we are treated to scads of pointless softcore sex scenes and graphic throat slashings. The barely competent production values include painful close-ups and—exclusively for the English-speaking market—remarkably bad dubbing. (When the lead heroine remarks that she's "got to go pee pee," one wonders if the people responsible for the translation really take their job all that seriously.)

The film's only, and I mean only high point is Wizard Video's box art. The cover sports a photo of a nude woman sprawled out, split up the middle (let's see someone get away with that nowadays), and a painting of a killer sporting a gleaming blade standing overhead. The back depicts two tense scenes with the aforementioned killer confronting a potential victim, and one

with himself being confronted by the police. All fine and dandy, except these are all scenes from an entirely different film, namely Jesús Franco Manera's *El Sádico de Notre Dame* (1974/1979) which was also released by Wizard Video under the title *Demoniac*. (That video release sports a cover which is completely incongruous, so one wonders if the art department at Wizard—shall we say—*fucked up* somewhere along the line. After reading the video box synopsis for their release of *Anthrophagus II aka Monster Hunter*, this seems to be a perfectly valid assumption.)

Don't bother.

Devon Says...

It seems that the theme of this issue of GICK! is wandering. Every fuckin' movie I've watched so far features *lots* of wandering. Whereas *The Hanging Woman* eventually stops meandering and gets good, *Tormentor* just kinda hobbles along to its dumb ending. I'd like to call this standard black-gloved-killer *giallo* fare, but, sadly, feel it's better than many of the films of its ilk. Most non-Argento helmed spaghetti murder "mysteries" completely bore me and *Tormentor* didn't. This is not to say I enjoyed it, it was just better than I expected it to be. So it sits, neither good nor bad, just kinda' there.

👁️ Ratu Ilmu Hitam (Black Magic Queen) (1979)

Rapi Films [Indonesia/Philippines]

DIR: Lilek Sudjio

PRO: Sabirin Kasdani

SCR: Subagio S. and Inam Tantowi

DOP: Asmawi

SFX: E.L. Badrun

MUS: Gatot Sudarto

STR: Ali Albar, Dorman Borisman, Mien Brojo, I.M. Damsyk, Adang Mansyur, W.D. Muchtar, Alan Naury, Teddy Purba, Tizar Purbaya, Belkiez Rachman, Jufri Sardan, Soendoro, Gordon Subandono, Bu Subekto, Doddy Suskma, Suzzanna, Sofia W.D., Siska Widowati, and Jafar Free York

Approximately 85m; Color

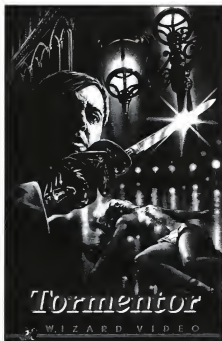
AKA: Black Magic III

Black Magic Terror

Queen of Black Magic

VID: Black Magic Terror [Twilight Video; 85m]

Ratu Ilmu Hitam—standard Asian trash with the perfunctory revenge motif—doesn't really pick up steam until the second half of the film when all of the mumbo-jumbo hullabaloo finally kicks in, resulting in heaping handfuls of chop socky grue. (Sure enough, we



get one of those wonderful "floating head" vampires; this time around, though, we are treated to the accursed victim ripping his own head off first! Ouch. Usually the departure is not nearly as painful.) Of course, you have to wade through inept dubbing and bland melodrama to get to any meat, but this is the price we must pay for, well, a really bad film.

Unfortunately for this flick, it's not nearly as memorable as other entries in the genre. (With only *one* scene of some poor schmuck throwing up live snakes and insects, it's sorely lacking when pitted against its peers for sheer geek value.) What I will commend this film for, though, is the exceptional lack of animal cruelty which is not only commonplace but also a staple to said films (including the other, unrelated films in the infamous Black Magic series).

If you like what you see here—but can stomach the animal butchery—check out such exemplary films (relatively speaking, of course) as *Devil Sorcery* (1988) and *Mystics in Bali* (1987) to see just how wild these Asian flicks can get.

For Asian horror aficionados only.

Ratu Ilmu Hitam continued...

Devon Says...

This film looked very familiar, because, if I'm not mistaken, Scott subjected me to it once before under the guise of a "video party." Of course, I couldn't remember anything but the death scenes, as it was Scott's house, and thus Scott was in charge of the fast forward button.

Anyway, this script was well thought out. A woman accused of being a witch is thrown over a cliff. It's a nasty tumble, and she bounces off a lot of things (like trees), crashes into a house or something, and then rolls into the arms of an old man. Of course, since he caught her before she actually hit the ground, she survives. Naturally, her savior is a warlock (or something) and convinces her that since she's been tried as a witch, she must exact revenge as a witch, so he schools her in the arts of black magic. As one would presume, her training begins with jumping on a trampoline in the moonlight.

Being an Asian effort, there are plenty of things to off-put the squeamish, such as actors with worms in their mouths, actors covered in bugs, and a baby cuddled up with a python. Though it contains the obligatory severed flying head, and an ending so abrupt it would jolt chop socky editors, this film does have a unique message: Allah is good.

☛ Stepsisters (1974)

Crescendo Cinema III [USA]

DIR: Perry W. Tong

PRO: Perry W. Tong

SCR: Perry W. Tong

DOP: H.I. Stine

EXP: George W. Tregre

MUS: Sandy Pinkard

STR: Minnie Bradley, Hal Fletcher, Bond Gideon, Tom Huff, Grady Page, Linda Patterson, Sandy Pinkard, George Rodgers, Sharyn Talbert, Perry W. Tong, George W. Tregre, and Byron Wolfe

AKA: The Texas Hill Killings

Approximately 70m; Color

VID: Stepsisters [Regal Video; 75(70)m]

ADL: A DEADLY DUO!

To be honest, the plot of this inebriated drama completely eludes me as I sit down to churn out a review. Something about a rotgut-swilling pilot who is offed by his wife and stepsister, with a whole lot of adultery somehow fitting into the equation. What I do remember is that this flick spends too much time on rednecks arguing, and too little time on the gruesome

murders that punctuate the tepidity. The gore includes a bloody stabbing with a butcher knife, and—by far the only real reason to watch this film—a shotgun victim trying futilely to keep his exposed entrails from falling out. The rest of the film—migraine-inducing edits, tedious camerawork and intrusive close-ups, a sorry 70s garage rock soundtrack, and the aforementioned bickering hicks—make it a chore to appreciate the few worthwhile, exploitive elements therein. (The filmmakers even try to cop Night of the Living Dead's end credits sequence with its grainy black & white stills replacing the action; needless to say, their take is as ineffectual as Romero's was effective.)

Much like Blood Mania, Stepsisters is a whole lotta' nothing disguised as a horror flick.

Apparently, the peak of the director's career is marked by a made for cable television show called Scuba World; needless to say, I wasn't surprised by this piece of trivia in the least.

Mike Boom makes a cameo.

Devon Says...

The movie starts with flashing red sirens and quickly goes down from there. The viewer is treated to lots of wandering in the beginning, with only the bizarre close ups of things like flower patterns on the wall and terrible music cues (dig that theme song) to hold one's interest. Whoever edited this had some very unique ideas, as the cameras often change post-dialogue delivery. Constantly seeing people flash across the screen after their lines were said made me feel as though I were watching bad 70s porn... but with worse acting. The film also features the talents of a very spiffy boom mike, which appears whenever the sheriff's car is seen outside the farm. How the filmmakers managed to keep this nifty device out of other scenes is beyond me.

As for the plot: The characters in this are just full of ideas that could really work. Like when a wife is fleeing from her enraged husband, she stops and places a chair in his path. Instead of running over or around it, it trips him and renders him completely immobile for several seconds, just like in real life. Not to be outdone by his wife, the husband hatches a plan to kill her. His big scheme to get away with it is to make a first degree murder look like a second degree murder because no jury in the world will convict him for that. Pseudo-incestuous lesbianism and a disjointed, confusing ending were, of course, what was needed to round everything out.

☛ The Toolbox Murders (1977)

Cal-Am Productions [USA]

DIR: Dennis Donnelly
 PRO: Tony di Dio
 SCR: Robert Easter, Neva Friedmann,
 and Ann N. Kindberg
 DOP: Gary M. Graver
 MFX: Ed Ternes
 MUS: George Deaton
 STR: Robert Bartlett, Nicholas Beauvy, Betty Cole,
 Aneta Corsaut, George Deaton, Don Diamond,
 Tim Donnelly, Marcie Drake, Wesley Eure,
 Pamelyn Ferdin, Robert Forward, Gil Galvano,
 Evelyn Guerrero, John Hawker, Faith McSwain,
 Cameron Mitchell, Kelly Nichols, James Nolan,
 Kathleen O'Malley, Victoria Perry, Alisa Powell,
 and Marianne Walter

Approximately 94m; Color

VID: The Toolbox Murders
 [United Home Video; 93(94)m]
 The Toolbox Murders
 [VCI Home Video; 93(94)m]
 The Toolbox Murders
 [Video Treasures; 93(94)m]
 The Toolbox Murders [Vipco (PAL); 90(93)m]

ADL: *Bit by bit... by bit he carved a nightmare!*

Someone is putting their toolbox to good use in an apartment building run by Cameron Mitchell and his nephew Wesley Eure (Will from TV's original *Land of the Lost*). After half of the tenants have been given the workshop treatment in various grisly fashions (limit one tool per customer), a young girl is abducted, and her brother starts his own investigation with the help of the owner's nephew.

There are some interesting and unorthodox approaches to the otherwise typical stalk'n/slash material, as well as a few other kickbacks (at least in the eyes of trash film aficionados). Cameron Mitchell as a bible-spouting, lollipop-sucking, nails-on-a-chalkboard-singing psychopath whose favorite tune is "Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child" is one. Wesley Eure and his ability to single-handedly lay waste to any film he's in with his overacting is another. Seeing a handful of well-known porn stars getting the Black & Decker treatment isn't far behind, either.

On that note, it's easy to look past the misogynistic murders (one is "nailed", another is "drilled," another "hammered," et al.) when the rest of the damn film is so awkward. Despite everything, the whole mess proves to be rather engaging, both as a thriller and as an enjoyably shoddy production. And the gore is, well, fairly brutal, predating other such toolbox "classics" as *Driller Killer* and *Nail Gun Massacre*.

The film also claims to be based on a real series of events that happened in 1967; how substantial these

**BIT BY BIT...BY BIT
 HE CARVED
 A NIGHTMARE!**



**THE
 TOOLBOX
 MURDERS**

claims are, or if there's any credence to them whatsoever, one can only guess.

Throw in an incongruous soundtrack, and as much T&A as the story can withstand, and you have... well, you have something called *The Toolbox Murders*, so take it or leave it.

Devon Says...

Isn't it fortunate we have brilliant moviemakers to enlighten us about possible scenarios? Like "What would happen if a masked serial killer were loosed in The Nubile Young Women Apartment Complex?" This movie starts off in a misogynistic style akin to *Maniac*, but the slashings give way about half way through so that the viewer can be treated to the story of a lunatic trying to reclaim his dead daughter. I think this is a favorite of blurb-god Stephen King; whether that is a pro or con is a personal opinion. The whole thing's pretty dumb, and since this is evidently a true story, there must be some pretty dumb people out there... besides the filmmakers.



☛ Visions of Evil (1973)

Centronics International [USA]

DIR: Harry Thomason

PRO: Harry Thomason

SCR: Marshall Riggan

DOP: Bob Dracup and Jim Roberson

EXP: Joe Glass

SFX: Jack Bennett

MUS: Hank Levine

STR: Joe Barone, John Brown, Brenda Evans, Bob Ginnaven, Lou Hoffman, Dean Jagger, Etta Jagger, Jerald Reed, Lori Saunders, George Stewart, Seymour Treitman, Melane Wadkins, and Linda Wyse

AKA: So Sad About Gloria

Visions of Doom

Approximately 88m; Color

VID: Visions of Evil [Prism Entertainment; 85(88)m]

ADL: A Harrowing Descent Into Madness

Gloria Wellman is released from a psychiatric institution, having somewhat recovered from seeing her

father brutally murdered when she was a young girl. Her uncle—who is also executor of her vast estate—is to look after her. Apparently, Gloria still suffers from a series of strange visions involving a man in a hat and cloak hacking away at an old crate with an axe at a deserted train station. Shortly thereafter, a young woman is given the twice over by some goon with a stocking over his ugly mug and his shiny new axe. Five months later, the murder still unsolved, Gloria meets a writer sitting in a tree on her property while she's out horseback riding. They marry, and eventually move into the selfsame house where the aforementioned axe murder took place...

Gee, I bet you can't see where all of this is heading. (Groan.) If the bland, unbearably clichéd "husband trying to drive his wife crazy for her inheritance" plot device doesn't put you down for the count, the stilted, melodramatic, painfully ponderous script should do the trick. (Egads! How could someone actually delude himself into thinking this dialogue would float? Guess the writer read too many Harlequin romances as a youngster. Sheesh.)

The production values are passable considering this sucker's low budget (save for some continuity problems), but—unfortunately—they compliment the similarly lackluster material. Exploitation elements are slim, with only some very brief partial nudity, one splashy axe murder, and the appearance of a Tor Johnson mask to hold a trash fiend's interest. (Good as the bloodshed may be, it just doesn't justify the price of admission.)

Visions of Evil is slow paced and slow-witted entertainment aimed at those whose tolerance for sappy melodrama is quite high; if I were the one promoting the film, I'd be tempted to revise the adline to "A Harrowing Descent Into The Mundane". (I wish to heck I could have slept through this flick, but—unfortunately—my snoring kept me awake through its entirety.)

Director Thomason also brought us Encounters with the Unknown the same year, a Twilight Zone-style horror anthology that—ironically—boasts narration by Rod Serling.

Devon Says...

I think this was supposed to be an intelligent movie. There are a lot of literary references in the script as well as symbolism. Although none of it is too ham fisted, it still can't help being a bit boring. Visions of Evil is terribly scored, though, and one rolling shot gives the viewer a good look at all of the production lights.

The skinny: A rich young woman who went nuts is released, but she has visions of a guy that looks like Mr. Hyde with a hatchet opening a crate. (It turns

out the dude is death.) She meets some guy in a tree and falls in love and the visions stop, but when they move into a house where an axe murder took place, she begins hearing a music box playing. Fearing another breakdown, she wants to leave, but convinces herself of the necessity to face the situation. The real question: Is her new hubby gas-lighting her, or is the place haunted? Better than *The Carpenter*, worse than *Rebecca*.

♥ Women in Cages (1971)

New World Pictures [USA]

and Premiere Productions [Philippines]

DIR: Gerardo de Leon

PRO: Ben Balatbat

SCR: David R. Osterhout and James H. Watkins

DOP: Felipe Sacdalan

EXP: Roger Corman and Cirio H. Santiago

SFX: Santos Hilario

MUS: Tito Arevalo

STR: Holly Anders, Bernard Bodine, Judith M. Brown (aka Judy Brown), Nick Cayari, Andres Centenera, Roberta Collins, Charlie Davao (aka Charles Davis), Marissa Delgado, Paquito Diaz, Jennifer Gan, Pam Grier, Dwight Howard, Johnny Long, Paul Sawyer, Roberta Swift, and Jeffrey Taylor

AKA: *Women's Penitentiary II*

Approximately 80m; Color ~~XXXX~~

VID: *Women in Cages*

[New Horizons Home Video; 80m]

Women's Penitentiary II

[MCM Entertainment; 90(80)m]

ADL: *White skin on the black market!*

Carol Jefferies makes the mistake of dating "businessman" Rudy, owner of the ship the *Zulu Queen* (a "floating whorehouse" that is home to all sorts of sleazy goings-on). When he is almost caught for possession, she unwittingly becomes the scapegoat and is sentenced to ten years hard labor. Needless to say, the prison camp is not the vacation she expects, as its ran by Alabama, a chief matron who has it in for whities. ("This is going to be just like home... only different!") Insult to injury, Carol's sleazy bo bribes her junkie cellmate to finish her off. As things become unbearable, an attempted escape becomes inevitable.

In case last issue didn't tide you over, here's another slice of Filipino exploitation that dishes up everything one has come expect from their particular brand of WIP films. (Let's see... half-nekkid female prisoners. Check. One wicked wardness. Check. One torture chamber. Check. Numerous shower scenes. Check. Lesbian rape. Check. Gang rape. Check. White slavery. Check. Heroin addiction. Check. Gratuitous

cockfighting. Check. Inter-racial tension. Check. Vic Diaz in a supporting role. Well, scratch that one. Otherwise, it looks like we're batting a hundred.)

Although one of the first of its kind, this offering from de Leon (co-director of such "Blood Island" epics as *Brides of Blood* and *Mad Doctor of Blood Island*) doesn't stand up very well to Jack Hill's offerings (*The Big Doll House* and *The Big Bird Cage*) even though it bears the same dark flair of de Leon's earlier efforts. Grier is enjoyable to watch as always, but isn't given as much to work with here as she had in Hill's classics of exploitation. And—despite the film's seedier edge—the exploitive elements aren't nearly as racy. (Although nudity is present, the approach is often coy, with any and all public shots conveniently blocked by props in the foreground.)

Many resources cite this film as having *Women's Penitentiary III* as an alternate title, yet every copy I've stumbled across on video is a notch down on the numbering system.

Enjoyably sleazy, but only for WIPpies.

Devon Says...

If *Escape From Alcatraz* were set in the Philippines instead of *The Rock*, was surrounded by a jungle instead of water, starred some dumb girl instead of Clint Eastwood, and had been really, really stupid, it woulda' been *Women in Cages*. An American plays fall girl for her beau, and ends up under the supervision of Pam Grier (playing the obligatory dike warden). One of the lead's cellmates is trying to cozy up to her, another is trying to kill her, and the other just keeps trying to shank the would-be murderess. Not much happens, and everyone looks extremely dirty. While this movie is very, very bad, it doesn't seem any worse than other WIP flicks I've seen.



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Warning! Individuals selling copies of videos "from one collector to another" can look elsewhere to sell their third-generation wares; only legitimate video companies are welcome to tread on these grounds.


Painful Excursions Volume One, Number Ten (Fall 1996) Only \$3.00

This—our first nationally distributed issue—features the ground-breaking expose “Snuff—The Making of an Urban Legend” which examines both the infamous production which helped coin the term, and the resulting myth that is perpetuated to this day by the media and public alike. (An updated version of this article later appeared in *The Skeptical Inquirer—The Magazine for Science and Reason*. The author also followed it up several years later with “Snuff—The Perpetuation of a Myth,” which appears in *GICK!* Volume One, Number Three.) Also included is “One Man’s Trash,” a retrospective on the late exploitation film mogul Al Adamson (with a complete filmography), “Homemade Horrors,” a look at splatter-oriented fanzines of years past, and even a couple of short-lived columns. Films reviewed include such questionable milestones in cinematic entertainment as *Aswang*, *Bakterion*, *Blackenstein*, *The Burning Moon*, *The Child*, *Corpse Fucking Art*, *Holocausto Canibal*, *Hot Love*, *Jennifer*, *La Muerte del Chacal*, *My Sweet Satan*, *Mystics in Bali*, *The Night God Screamed*, *Nurse Sherri*, *Nutriaman—The Copasaw Creature*, *L’Ossessa*, *Im Schloss der Blutigen Begierde*, *The Touch of Satan*, and *The Virgin Witch*. Unlike later issues, this earlier outing comes packaged in a nifty tabloid format (similar to that of *The Monster Times*, if you’re old enough to remember such trend-setting publications from the 1970s). 24 pages. SP103

GICK! Volume One, Number Zero (Summer 1998)
Only \$3.00

Doubling as *Painful Excursions* Volume One, Number Eleven, this crossover issue is the first to sport a glossy cover. (It’s only black and white, so everyone would have to wait another year for the inevitable color.) This issue includes “The Ghastly One—The Films of Andy Milligan,” which includes a retrospective on Staten Island’s no-budget auteur (with a complete filmography), and “How to Make a Kick-Ass Horror Film,” which offers aspiring filmmakers a can’t-loose formula on how to produce a straight-to-video release that won’t be relegated to Blockbuster’s PVT bargain bins... for very long, anyway. Films reviewed include such luminary schlockfests as *L’Altro Inferno*, *Amityville Dollhouse*, *Andy Warhol’s Bad*, *The Axe*, *Blood Orgy of the She-Devils*, *Bloody Friday*, *Cannibal The Musical*, *Death Row Diner*, *The Deathhead Virgin*, *Geek Maggot Bingo*, *Hardcore Horror House on Highway Five*, *Jacko Lantern*, *La Maldición de la Bestia*, *The Meateater*, *Point of Terror*, *San Francisco Ball*, *Le Semain del Asasino*, *La Síndrome di Stendhal*, *Sometimes Aunt Martha Does Dreadful Things*, *Spawn of the Slithis*, *Suited Homu*, *Things*, and *Zoltan... Hound of Dracula*. C’mon... what’re you waiting for? A life? Buy our magazines instead! Trust me... the guys who read *GICK!* become certified chick magnets. Everything changes when you invest in... okay, you got me, I’m just trying to fill up some space to accommodate the layout. So sue me. 32 pages. SP106


GICK! Volume One, Number One (Spring 1999)
Only \$4.00

From the ashes of *Painful Excursions*, *The New Journal of Horror, Splatter & Exploitation Films* rises like a tick-infested phoenix, eager to spread its irreverent approach to journalism. This issue includes “Amando de Ossorio Rodriguez—La Padre de las Muerte Ciego,” a look at the filmmaker responsible for creating the inimitable *Blind Dead* as well as other Spanish horrors (with a complete filmography), and the first installment of “The Trash Collector” which offers tips—and a price guide—on collecting horror-related movie novelizations. Also included is a look behind the scenes of the since-shelved *Stigmata* Film production, *God’s Hooks*. Films reviewed include such filth-encrusted gems as *The Amazing Transplant*, *Autopsia*, *The Brides Wore Blood*, *The Curse of the Screaming Dead*, *Curvaceous Corpses*, *Death Line*, *Demon Queen*, *The Disco Godfather*, *Il Etait une Foix... le Diable*, *The Headless Eyes*, *The House That Vanished*, *Lucker the Necrophagus*, *Mantis in Lace*, *Maschera di Cera*, *Meat*, *Midnight Intruders*, *Los Ojos Azules de la Muneca Rota*, *Pigs Possessed*, *La Prédicateurs de la Nuit*, *La Revanche des Morts Vivantes*, *Screamtime*, *The Seeds of Evil*, *Shock! Shock! Shock!*, *Tentacles*, *The Toy Box*, *Track of the Moon Beast*, *Unhinged*, and *Vampira*. And, oh, what a pretty color cover it has. Buy it for the pretty color cover. Sure, the guts are still black and white newsprint, but, c’mon, the cover... 48 pages. SP107

GICK! Volume One, Number Two (Fall 1999)

Only \$4.00

This—our first theme issue—gives “The Devil His Dues” and is thus dedicated to Ol’ Scratch himself, and all of the films from the 1970s which required either his presence or that of his disciples. This issue includes the article “Satan in the 70s,” which studies the trend of devil worshipping in the decade of decadence, and even offers the humorous sidebar “Demonic Possession—Diagnosing the Symptoms.” Films reviewed include such hellbent excursions as Alucarda—La Hija de las Tinieblas, L’Anticristo, Asylum of Satan, Beast of the Yellow Night, Blood Orgy of the She-Devils, La Casa dell’Exorcismo, Chi Sei?, Dark Dreams, Daughters of Satan, The Demon Lover, The Devil’s Concubines, Devil’s Ecstasy, The Devil’s Rain, Disciple of Death, Hardcore, Holocaust 2000, The Horny Devils, I Drink Your Blood, Inquisition, The Lucifers, Magdalena—Von Teufel Besessen, The Nightmare Never Ends, L’Ossessa, Peety Wheatstraw—The Devil’s Son-in-Law, La Plus Longue Nuit du Diable, Riti, Magie Nere e Segrete Orge nel Trecento, Sacrilege, Satan’s Black Wedding, Satan’s Cheerleaders, Satan’s Lust, Sex Rituals of the Occult, Sexual Awareness, Tutti i Colori del Buio, Un Urlo dalle Tenenbre, Warlock Moon, Werewolves on Wheels, and The Wicked Caress of Satan. Want to piss off yer pastor? Then this is the issue for you! Buy lots of copies and hand them out at church! Recommended by the official Church of Satan. 48 pages. SP109



GICK! Volume One, Number Three (Spring 2000)

Only \$4.00

In case the article about snuff films in Painful Excursions Volume One, Number Ten didn't sate your thirst, this issue proudly boasts the author's much anticipated follow-up, "Snuff—The Perpetuation of a Myth," which examines the tenacity of such urban legends, despite the lack of evidence to supports them. (Accompanying this exposé is a humorous sidebar, "The Making of a Snuff Film Historian," which offers the author's first-person account of his short-lived notoriety as an expert on the subject.) This issue also includes "Blood Orgy of the Astro-Zombies," which offers a look at the films of Ted V. Mikel (with a complete filmography), as well as a new installment of "The Trash Collector," which chronicles the author's pitfalls on eBay, the targets online auction site. Films reviewed include such foetid wonders as American Nightmare, Barn of the Naked Dead, The Capture of Bigfoot, La Casa al Fondo del Parco, The Cross of the 7 Jewels, La Figlia di Frankenstein, Giallo a Venezia, Girls for Rent, Horror Hospital, L'Iguana della Lingua di Fuoco, Jekyll and Hyde Portfolio, Licantropo, The Love Butcher, The Mad Love Life of a Hot Vampire, The Mummy and the Curse of the Jackal, The Rape After, The Sinful Dwarf, SS Campo Extermination, Tower of Evil, The Undertaker and His Pals, Widow Blue, Zombi 3, and 8MM. Hey, we just keep getting better and better, so buy up these back issues while you can before we go bankrupt. 48 pages. SP109

GICK! Volume One, Number Four (Fall 2000)

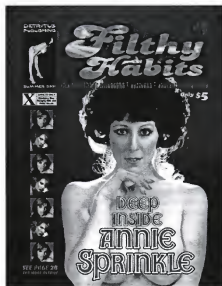
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This—our second theme issue—focuses on horror and exploitation films from the Philippines, and includes the article “The Horrors of Blood Island,” which serves as a primer for the initiated, “Mad Director of Blood Island,” which offers a retrospective on filmmaker Eddie Romero, and “From Teenage Juvies to Monster Movies,” which focuses on the island-hopping career of John Ashley. (The latter two articles include complete filmographies.) Also included in the latest installment of “The Trash Collector” is a look at Eerie Publications, accompanied by a bibliography and price guide. Filipino films reviewed include such Asian atrocities as Alyas Batman en Robin, Beast of Blood, Beyond Atlantis, The Big Bird Cage, The Big Doll House, The Blood Drinkers, Brides of Blood, Caged Fury, Demon of Paradise, Devil Woman, The Killing of Satan, The Mad Doctor of Blood Island, Madonna... Babaeng Ahas, Night of the Cobra Woman, Psycho Sex Killer, Pusang Itim, Regal Shock—The Movie, Sudden Death, Superbeast, The Thirsty Dead, The Twilight People, Vampire Hookers, Vampire Men of the Lost Planet, The Woman Hunt, and Wonder Women. Non-Filipino films reviewed include such lobotomizing masterpieces as Blood Sabbath, Blood Tide, Enigma Rosso, Frozen Scream, Frankenstein Island, Mardi Gras Massacre, Octaman, and Orloff y el Hombre Invisible. By far our best issue yet! (Unless you consider Filipino films a bad thing.) 48 pages. SP110



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Up From the Depths

Continued from page 2

Anyone who has followed this magazine for any length of time is probably aware that I am a rare breed of shit magnet. If anything could possibly go wrong, no matter how much effort I extol trying to avoid even the slightest pitfall, it will. What made this issue an exception, pray tell? In short, I had woefully and naively deluded myself into thinking that the magazine would actually bear some resemblance to the camera-ready copies that were sent to the printers.

Anyone looking at last issue may have noticed that—with even the most presentable copies on their store's shelves—GICK! *el numero quatro* looked like shit. With nary an exception, all of the pages were misaligned, some butt up against one edge of the page, while others were situated at angles so odd as to interest the fabled Hounds of Tindalos. (Warning: The publishers of this magazine cannot be held responsible for any inter-dimensional gateways breached by H. Belknap Long's slaving creations.)

Furthermore, despite my upgrades, the pictures were muddier than ever; ink was smeared everywhere, as the pages were not allowed to dry before being collated; and—to add insult to injury—the Small Publishers Co-Op advertisement was still misaligned. (The latter was a point of contention I had with them shortly before issue four went to press, as I wanted to place it myself after the poor job they did the previous issue. They insisted they would take great pains in making sure it was properly centered this time out, all the while chastising me for leaving them a border with which to work. Silly fucking me.)

I immediately e-mailed them about my disappointment with the quality of the printing (or lack thereof). The following day, I wrote another letter to the founder of the Co-Op, with whom I had usually dealt, although he no longer held the position he did previous. It's been over a week now since those initial e-mails found themselves hurtling through cyberspace, and still no response. Even I can take a hint, thank you.

Obviously, both the quality of number four, and the boosted cover price of all forthcoming issues will probably affect the overall sales. If pre-orders drop, we will more than likely lose our major distributor. If this happens, and GICK! goes under, feel free to send all of your hate mail to the aforementioned incompetents about whom I waxed last issue.

So, my claims about finances being inconsequential were regrettably exaggerated. As long as there isn't a decline in sales, I probably will continue to have the means to publish this rag. If this previously

unexpected problem with circulation becomes an issue, though, then I will have no choice but to close up shop. All because someone wasn't doing their job and watching the presses. Funny thing, that.

There were some other things I wanted to get off my chest, but I've already overstayed my welcome. Well, come to think of it, most of those will require surgery, and maybe even some chemo, so I guess that does just about wrap things up.

Egads. Sixteen years. How time flies when you're having "fun".

"So Many Bad Films... So Few Brain Cells"

Scott Aaron Stine, 9/29/00

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

GICK! would like to thank—as always—friends, family and loyal readers who have offered their continued support, whether it be financial or emotional, and to the few professionals in the business world who actually adhere to what the label implies. You have become a rare breed indeed, and for that you have our support and undying respect. Also, a tip of the hat to the amazing program from Adobe known as PhotoShop. (If only their scaled down PhotoDeluxe wasn't so buggy, Scott's ulcer wouldn't be such a monster.)

Scott is darn near fed up with everyone else he has been unfortunate enough to deal with. His shit list includes—but is not relegated to—such ephemermorphs and incompetent services as H.A. (Alan) Hale of All Horror Video; Hart D. Fisher, publisher of Boneyard Press and editor of Verotik; the shambling mound that inhabits the Broadway Postal Station; Compaq, for making such bugfucked computers as the Presario 2266; many—if not most—of the dealers who sell their soiled wares through eBay and other online auction houses; deadbeat bidders, another eBay mainstay; the Everett Public Library (or at least some of the individuals affiliated with it) for their ineptitude and/or stabbing him in the back; the Small-Publishers Co-Op, for making him look bad and not trying to make good on their mistakes; Bill Kosher, for kicking the bucket and donating his house to charity; and every other mutherfucker who feels the need to stand in his way. You have his complete and utter abhorrence. Grrrrrr...

Letters to the Editor

PO Box 5273, Everett, WA 98206-5273

What's this? Hardly any feedback on our Filipino issue? Just because we're hot shit now doesn't mean you all can slack off. Oh, well, I guess the old adage of "either feast or famine" still holds true, like it or not. What if I promise not to review any more Filipino flicks, huh? (Oh, like that's going to happen.)

Scott,

Congrats on another great issue. You made Filipino horror movies sound amusing, which takes considerable skill considering they are Filipino horror movies. Washington needs spin doctors—you should consider going into political speech writing.

By the way, I have an original World Premiere Home Video copy of *Caged Fury*, in very good condition complete with oversized box and storage case. Since you're such a big fan of Filipino films, I'd be willing to part with it in a fair trade, say for half a pack of Double Mint gum, or maybe a ball made out of rubber bands.

I agree that bootleggers are scum. Before I garnered a large enough collection to trade for whatever I want, I bought many a \$25 dub of a third gen Fulci film with Spanish subs and a tracking problem. Hopefully Anchor Bay and the DVD revolution will put them out of business.

Stay Sick!

Joe Konrath

*A half a pack of Double Mint gum? Are you mad! Do you think I'd fall for such a... wait a minute. I paid five bucks for my copy of *Caged Fury*. Uhm... any chance you would want two copies of said film? They'd make for an attractive pair of bookends, or maybe even... The Editor*

NEWS FLASH

Just as this issue is going to press, it appears that—due to numerous unforeseen circumstances—all of our forthcoming titles will either be cancelled or put on hiatus. It is advisable to check our official website at www.stigmatapress.com for regular updates on our publishing schedule. Regardless of the outcome, I would like to thank all of our loyal readers for their continued support. The Editor



NEXT ISSUE

Available October 1st, 2001

Cannibals, cannibals and more cannibals! No supernatural hokum or mad scientist-style bull-snot cluttering up the stalls, just slop buckets full of good old-fashion anthropophagia. If longpig is yer thing, then stick around for an unflinching look into the world of cinematic cannibalism. (Nunna' that new shit... just flicks from the unrepentant 1970s make the grades in this book.)

Addie pre Adesso...



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